

OFDA Annual Report

FY 1997

Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Bureau for Humanitarian Response U.S. Agency for International Development

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BHR / OFDA

ANNUAL REPORT

FY 1997

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The FY 1997 Annual Report of the U.S. Agency for International Development / Bureau for Humanitarian Response / Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance was researched, written, and produced by Cara Feys, Jennifer Gayer, Guy Lawson, Alex Mahoney, Peter McCormick, Wesley Mossburg, Joseph Ponte, Zema Semunegus, Catherine Stiff, Amy Tohill-Stull, and Joanne Welsh of The Mitchell Group / Labat-Anderson, Incorporated in Washington, D.C., under contract number AOT-000-C-00-4121-00.

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A Widow in Kabul, Afghanistan receives chickens and feed through a BHR / OFDA - funded ICRC program to improve living conditions.



COMMONLY USED ACRONYMS

This page contains information on acronyms in the following categories:

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U.S. Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) and Private Groups

ADRA Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AICF/USA Action Against Hunger
ARC American Refugee Committee
CARE Cooperation for American Relief Everywhere
CRS Catholic Relief Services
IMC International Medical Corps
IRC International Rescue Committee
C/US Save the Children/U.S.
UMCOR United Methodist Committee on Relief
WVRD World Vision Relief & Development

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

ACF Action Contre la Faim(Action Against Hunger)
FHI Food for the Hungry International
MDM Médecins du Monde/Médicos del Mundo (Doctors of the World)
MSF Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders)
MCI Mercy Corps International
SCF Save the Children Fund

Country of Origin

/B Belgium
/F France
/H Holland
/UK United Kingdom
/US(A) United States (of America)

International Organizations and United Nations (U.N.) Agencies

EU European Union
FAO Food and Agriculture Organization (U.N.)

ICRC International Committee of the Red Cross
IFRC International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
PAHO Pan American Health Organization (U.N.)
UNDHA U.N. Department of Humanitarian Affairs
UNHCR U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF U.N. Children's Fund
UNOCHA U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (formerly UNDHA)
NSCR U.N. Security Council Resolution
WCC World Council of Churches
WFP World Food Program (U.N.)
WHO World Health Organization (U.N.)

U.S. Government Organizations/Programs

BHR Bureau for Humanitarian Response (USAID)
CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)
DART Disaster Assistance Response Team (USAID/DART)
DOD U.S. Department of Defense
ENI Bureau for Europe and the Newly Independent States (USAID)
EPA U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FFP Office of Food for Peace (USAID/BHR)
FEWS Famine Early Warning System (USAID-sponsored program)
LAC Latin America and the Caribbean
OFDA Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/BHR)
OTI Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID/BHR)
PRM Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration (State)
PK/HA Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Affairs (DOD)
State U.S. Department of State
USAID U.S. Agency for International Development
USAF U.S. Air Force
USDA U.S. Department of Agriculture
USFS U.S. Forest Service (USDA)
USG United States Government
USGS U.S. Geological Survey (U.S. Department of the Interior)

Miscellaneous

EDRC Emergency Disaster Relief Coordinator
FY fiscal year
IDP internally displaced person
MT metric ton
P.L. Public Law



How Does the U.S. Government Provide Humanitarian Aid?

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The Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

OFDA is the office within USAID responsible for providing non-food, humanitarian assistance in response to international crises and disasters. The USAID Administrator is designated as the President's Special Coordinator for International Disaster Assistance and OFDA assists in the coordination of this assistance. OFDA is part of the Bureau for Humanitarian Response (BHR), along with the Office of Food For Peace (BHR/FFP), the Office of Transition Initiatives (BHR/OTI), the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (BHR/PVC), Administrative Management Staff (BHR/AMS), the Office of Program, Planning, and Evaluation (BHR/PPE), and the Office of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (BHR/ASHA).

BHR/OFDA is organized into four divisions, under the management of the Office of the Director. The Disaster Response Division (DRD) is responsible for managing the largest portion of BHR/OFDA's assistance: the aid given in response to disasters and crises that occur overseas. The Prevention, Mitigation, Preparedness, and Planning (PMPP) division oversees the portfolio of projects designed to prevent or reduce the impact of disasters on the people and economic infrastructure in foreign countries. The Operations Support (OS) division provides the necessary technical and logistical support to the office and its programs and personnel overseas. The Program Support (PS) division administers the office's financial and accounting systems which allow for rapid disbursement of funds in order to respond quickly to disasters. BHR/OFDA also maintains a staff of field personnel stationed in critical countries to monitor both disaster response and BHR/OFDA/PMPP activities.

BHR/OFDA/DRD provides humanitarian assistance in response to a declaration of a foreign disaster made by the Chief of the U.S. Mission or the U.S. Department of State. Once an event or situation is determined to require USG assistance, BHR/OFDA can immediately provide up to \$25,000 to the U.S. Embassy or USAID Mission to purchase relief supplies locally or give a contribution to a relief organization in the affected country. BHR/OFDA can also send its own relief commodities, such as plastic sheeting, tents, or water purification units, from one of its five stockpiles located in Panama, Italy, Guam, Thailand, and the U.S. Increasingly, BHR/OFDA deploys short- or long-term field personnel to countries where disasters are occurring or threaten to occur, and in some cases, dispatches a USAID/DART.

The largest percentage of BHR/OFDA's assistance goes to relief and rehabilitation project grants managed by PVO/NGOs and IOs. Examples of relief projects include airlifting relief supplies to affected populations in remote locations, managing primary health care and supplementary feeding centers, and providing shelter materials to disaster evacuees and displaced persons. A rehabilitation project might immunize dislocated populations against disease, provide seeds and tools to farmers who have been affected by disasters, or drill wells or rehabilitate water systems in drought-stricken countries. BHR/OFDA carefully monitors the organizations implementing these projects to ensure that resources are used wisely and to determine if the project needs to be adapted to changing conditions. The goal of each project is to meet the humanitarian needs of the affected population, with the aim of returning the population to self sufficiency.

The "notwithstanding" clause of Section 491 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 states that no statutory or regulatory requirements shall restrict BHR/OFDA's ability to respond to the needs of disaster victims in a timely

fashion. BHR/OFDA follows the standard USAID procedures for routine procurements, but utilizes expedited or modified procedures when necessary to achieve its disaster response objectives. The first principle in disaster response accountability is to ensure that appropriate assistance gets to the neediest victims in time to minimize death and suffering. Procurement and accounting procedures may be expedited, but must include effective systems of internal control.

Not all of BHR/OFDA's assistance goes to providing aid in response to disasters. BHR/OFDA's PMPP division oversees a portfolio of projects designed to reduce the impact of disasters on victims and economic assets in disaster-prone countries. Over the last several years, BHR/OFDA/PMPP has invested in a number of programs in partnership with the USGS, PAHO, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, the World Environment Center, and other offices within USAID. These programs not only enhance a country's capacity to manage its own disasters and hazards, but also promote the transfer of technology, goods, and services between the U.S. and the host country. BHR/OFDA/PMPP programs range from investing in drought early warning systems that can possibly head off a famine to training local relief workers to manage the response to a disaster more effectively. BHR/OFDA/PMPP is increasingly investing in programs designed to prevent, mitigate, prepare, and plan for complex emergencies, which are more the result of human actions than of acts of nature.

Other U.S. Government Offices That Provide Foreign Humanitarian Assistance

BHR/OFDA is not the only office within the USG that provides humanitarian aid to foreign countries. BHR/FFP is responsible for administering the USG's foreign food aid programs, under U.S. P.L. 480 Title II and Title III. Title II emergency food aid programs are targeted to vulnerable populations suffering from food insecurity as a result of natural disasters, civil conflict, or other crises. BHR/OTI is the office within USAID responsible for providing assistance to countries that are in a stage of transition from crisis to recovery. Its assistance is designed to facilitate the transition to peace and democracy by aiding in the demobilization of combatants or developing democratic governance structures within the country. Other parts of USAID, such as the regional bureaus, provide foreign development aid, which often complements humanitarian relief programs or can be regarded as disaster rehabilitation assistance. Countries that have achieved sustainable development are less likely to require massive USG humanitarian assistance.

Three of the biggest providers of USG humanitarian assistance are USDA, State/PRM, and DOD/PK/HA. USDA works closely with BHR/FFP in allocating surplus food commodities to developing countries, under the Section 416(b) program of the Agricultural Act of 1949. This food aid is often used for emergency feeding programs in countries experiencing food shortages due to drought or civil strife. State/PRM provides multilateral grants to international relief organizations in response to refugee emergency appeals and contributes to the regular program budgets of organizations such as UNHCR. DOD/PK/HA coordinates the utilization of DOD assets for humanitarian assistance overseas. In 1997, DOD provided humanitarian assistance in northern Iraq and former Yugoslavia.

USGS, CDC, USFS, and EPA can provide technical assistance in response to disasters and potential hazards overseas.

BHR/OFDA Publications

In addition to the Annual Report, BHR/OFDA produces several other publications that are available on the INTERNET and by request. One of the most useful is the Field Operations Guide, a pocket-sized manual that contains methodology for conducting disaster assessments, as well as information on BHR/OFDA response procedures. BHR/OFDA also produces current reports on disasters and crises around the world. These reports describe the situation

and the corresponding USG response.

Current reports are available on several INTERNET gophers and World Wide Web sites, such as:

USAID Home Page - www.info.usaid.gov

UNOCHA (formerly UNDHA) ReliefWeb Home Page - www.reliefweb.int

Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA) Disaster Information Center - www.vita.org

To have these reports sent to you automatically, send an E-Mail message to:

listproc@info.usaid.gov, and type in the Message field:

subscribe OFDA-L <Your Name>



Successful Disaster Management in Latin America and The Caribbean

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Introduction

Latin America and the Caribbean face the constant threat of natural disasters, with hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, and landslides straining their resources every year. Until recently, the capacity of these countries to respond effectively to disasters was limited, and the U.S. Government (USG) often needed to provide large amounts of disaster response assistance. However, over the last ten years, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have improved their disaster management and response capacity to the point that USG disaster assistance is requested less frequently and is better targeted.

The recent disaster management success of Latin America and the Caribbean stems from a confluence of local, national, and international factors that have facilitated greater prevention, mitigation, and preparedness activities in the region. For example, at the local and national levels, growing economic self-sufficiency and the recognition by governments of the critical nature of disasters have increased the depth of resources available for preparedness and response. These factors, combined with international assistance in prevention and planning efforts, have led to the development of national emergency agencies, improved coordination among disaster managers, and the sharing of common response techniques and technical language. These developments are at the heart of the Latin American and Caribbean success.

Because of the improved local environment, OFDA has been able to maximize the benefits of its own prevention, mitigation, and preparedness efforts. These efforts, manifested in OFDA's management training, technical training, and network building activities, have become self-perpetuating, and their benefits reach much further than their original audience. Thus, OFDA has contributed to local successes in Latin America and the Caribbean and has complemented other developments in the region—thereby creating an overall improvement in disaster management, which is an important component of sustainable development.

OFDA's Role in Latin America and the Caribbean

OFDA contributes to regional success in disaster management primarily through two avenues: training and network building. The development of training and network building initiatives addresses the need for disaster preparedness by improving management skills, expanding knowledge of how to respond to disasters and what tools are needed to do so, and providing a network of organizations that can pool their resources and expertise to respond in the most efficient manner. Not only are OFDA's initiatives successful in providing these skills, but they are replicated locally without OFDA involvement. The self-replication of training and networking activities shows that participants in the programs have internalized the lessons learned through OFDA programs.

OFDA first saw an opportunity to use training as a tool to strengthen local capacity soon after it began its permanent regional presence, with the establishment of its Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) office in 1985. While training efforts were not new to the region, OFDA/LAC's approach differed from other efforts in that it aimed to be self-perpetuating by adopting formal, structured training initiatives in each country. OFDA/LAC anticipated that this approach would produce the sustained development of improved and common

management methods and greater local technical expertise, ultimately leading to improved management of disasters.

OFDA/LAC's training activities commenced in 1989 with the Disaster Management Training Program (DMTP). Beginning with its anchor course, Training for Instructors (Capacitación para Instructores), OFDA/LAC began the DMTP as a multi-course venture with instruction in disaster management concepts, effective training methods, and technical disciplines such as search and rescue and fire management. The DMTP was divided into four series of courses: Training Management, which teaches effective instruction skills, focusing on organization of materials, lesson planning, and classroom presentation; Disaster Program Administration/Management, which presents an introductory survey of disaster management concepts and definitions designed to teach participants a uniform approach to managing disasters in order to better coordinate and administer programs; Event Management, which provides technical training in areas such as damage assessment, needs analysis, and shelters; and Technical/Skills Support, which emphasizes specific emergency response knowledge in technical areas such as fire suppression, search and rescue, and hazardous materials handling.



Quito, Ecuador: A Disaster Program Management Course taught by Ecuadorian instructors for officials of the National Ministry of Health.

To help local and national authorities achieve the capabilities required to respond to disasters and to ensure the replicability of the DMTP, OFDA/LAC targeted staff of national disaster agencies and others involved in disaster management—primarily those who would continue as instructors in their respective countries—to attend the courses. OFDA/LAC's hope was that the participants would take the technical knowledge and management skills gained through its training back to their sponsoring agencies, who in turn, would commit the trainers to replicating the instruction to the end users: field assessment personnel, responders, paramedics, and decision makers.

The degree of participation and replicability of the training program has extended far beyond OFDA/LAC's initial hopes. Over the course of nine years, OFDA/LAC has had over 17,000 enrollments in its courses (with some trainees taking more than one course). The participants come from groups and organizations that are among the first to respond to any disaster, including national and local level civil defense agencies, firefighters, national forest and park service agencies, NGOs, and other agencies such as the local Red Cross chapters. By 1994, 147 national courses of the DMTP had been held independently of OFDA. By 1996, 17 training courses, workshops, or events, developed independently and using the course development methodology promoted by OFDA, had been held in Latin American countries.

Many government officials throughout the region have credited OFDA/LAC not only with the direct effects of its DMTP, but with the indirect or "spin-off" effects, as a number of former DMTP trainees and client institutions have initiated their own training programs modelled after the DMTP. In one case, a former state forestry service employee and OFDA/LAC trainee raised funds to produce her own Central American regional forest fire management conference and workshop after gaining the necessary skills from the DMTP. Through her efforts, national forest fire management agencies and courses have been established throughout Central America. She is now an independent disaster and organizational management consultant. The DMTP also has facilitated the creation of a disaster management instructors association by former participants from the Dominican Republic. The instructors association is the organization through which all training at the national level is coordinated, combining the efforts and expertise of the Red Cross, the Ministry of Health, firefighters, public works agencies, and Partners of the Americas.

In other cases, universities such as San Marcos University in Lima, Peru, and the University of Medellin, Colombia, have incorporated the DMTP curriculum into their requirements for medical students. Likewise, the University of Santa Catarina in Florianopolis, Brazil has assumed responsibility for all disaster training as a permanent component of its college curriculum.



Florianopolis, Brazil: First Training for Instructors Hand-Off workshop for Brazilian disaster program instructors.

Another long-range success of the DMTP has been its efforts to establish and develop permanent national training programs, integrated as formal units or components of the national emergency management organizations in the region. Thirteen Latin American and Caribbean nations have developed official disaster management training units within their national emergency management organizations, and these training units are still growing. Their establishment is one important step toward the sustainability and transferability of the DMTP. In addition, OFDA/LAC believes that it also has played a role in promoting the establishment of the national emergency management organizations themselves. Whereas only 10 of 17 Central and South American countries had national emergency management organizations when the DMTP was initiated in 1989, 16 of 17 countries in the region now have operational organizations.

Beyond this, many disaster response institutions credit the DMTP with improving their overall management capacity. Throughout the region, disaster leaders have adopted, to varying degrees, the DMTP's methodology for mitigation of and response to emergencies. For example, through OFDA's disaster management course, the National Insurance Institute of Costa Rica instructed engineers on disaster terminology and management to improve post-disaster assessments and risk insurance policies. Another example is the Salvadorean Emergency Commission, which requires that all potential response personnel, such as paramedics and firefighters, be graduates of OFDA's Advanced First Aid Course.

Networking is the second avenue by which OFDA/LAC helps local, national, and regional authorities achieve the capabilities required to respond to disasters. OFDA/LAC has focused on network building efforts that aim to increase contacts among disaster responders to better coordinate disaster prevention and response activities. Ultimately, these efforts have promoted the proliferation of OFDA/LAC's training concepts. They also have promoted closer working relationships among disaster response agencies in-country and with their regional and international counterparts.

The Pan American Health Organization is OFDA/LAC's primary partner focusing on health issues in disaster management. OFDA has been working with PAHO since 1987, supporting it with a grant to integrate health and social sector preparedness into disaster management through human resource development, risk analysis, and inventory of health/hospital infrastructure. Through these initiatives, PAHO works with numerous agencies and clients—particularly national and sub-regional agencies—to provide a channel for OFDA's prevention, mitigation, and preparedness activities far beyond that which could be reached by OFDA alone.

Another of OFDA's partners in Latin America and the Caribbean is Partners of the Americas. Through a cooperative agreement with OFDA in 1990, Partners of the Americas initiated a school safety and preparedness program that incorporates disaster safety training into school curricula. This program, which initially focused on Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Peru, has provided disaster training at the grassroots level to 250,000 students and 5,000 teachers in 1,200 schools. It also has fostered closer relationships among Partners of the Americas, ministries of education, and OFDA, through which information exchange can be expanded. This networking shifted the program's goal toward achieving self-sufficiency in school preparedness by incorporating emergency preparedness into the curricula of the ministries of education. To date, five of the six countries have achieved this goal. The sixth, Guatemala, is in the final stages of implementation. The program also has sparked the interest of other countries in the region, and El Salvador, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, and Panama all are implementing school preparedness through their respective education authorities. Each has set aside local financial resources and is requesting only technical assistance from the school safety and preparedness program.

One relationship that has brought about an exchange of information and technology is OFDA's association with the Caribbean Disaster Mitigation Project (CDMP), formalized through a cooperative agreement with OFDA and the Organization of American States (OAS). One of the most valuable activities undertaken by the CDMP is the mapping of potentially disastrous natural hazards. This computerized data can be used to improve land area planning and management practices in the Caribbean. The first mapping model measures storm surge, wave action,

and flooding potential for coastal Caribbean areas and has been applied in Jamaica, Belize, Antigua, and Dominica. Another version of this model will map landslides and seismic risks. Various organizations have shown interest in working with similar types of information to coordinate among government agencies, the scientific community, and the business community.

In addition to the organizations discussed above, OFDA/LAC has worked with the sixteen member states of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) since 1994. Created in 1991 by CARICOM (the Caribbean Community), CDERA has been working with OFDA/LAC to coordinate disaster management and strengthen its comprehensive response capacity. Under this arrangement, OFDA has also been coordinating its Caribbean Disaster Management Training with CDERA.

The Center for the Coordination for Prevention of Natural Disaster in Central America (CEPREDENAC) also coordinates closely with OFDA/LAC in planning and training. It has a regional plan for the reduction of disasters, which promotes the prevention and mitigation aspects of disaster management.

Through greater exchange of information and more appropriate division of tasks, the networks developed through these relationships create an environment more conducive to the coordination of prevention, mitigation, and preparedness activities, as well as disaster response. They are complementary to OFDA/LAC's training efforts and build upon the existing disaster management framework in Latin America and the Caribbean. Such networks improve the overall response to disasters in the region because of the quicker and more efficient response capacity arising from better coordination. This is exemplified in the following case study.

The 1994 Cauca/Huila Earthquake in Colombia

The disaster at Cauca/Huila began on June 6, 1994, when an earthquake measuring 6.4 on the Richter Scale hit the southwestern region of Colombia, near the Nevado del Huila volcano. Heavy rains already had drenched the area in the weeks before the earthquake, and when the earthquake hit, it spawned a series of landslides that completely destroyed four villages and damaged five others so badly that residents were not able to return. In all, 34 towns and villages were affected. Over 600 people died and 1,600 homes were destroyed. Three thousand homes were badly damaged and nearly 17,000 people were left homeless, 6,000 permanently. A total of 28,000 people were affected in some way by the disaster. Poor access to the area was a primary response problem. Roads and bridges had been wiped out by the mudslides and fog hindered air rescue operations. Also complicating the response was the fact that the disaster occurred on a national holiday in one of the most isolated areas of the country.



BHR/OFDA-funded plastic sheeting provided to persons displaced by mudslides induced by the 1994 earthquake in Cauca/Huila.



The Nevado del Ruiz volcano as seen from the air after its 1985 eruption.

Colombia's National Office for Disaster Prevention and Response (DNPAD—Dirección Nacional para la Prevención y Atención de Desastres) started responding to the disaster immediately by coordinating with its network of the Civil Defense, Colombian Red Cross, National Police, and the Ministry of Health. This network confirmed the location of the earthquake and assessed the damage sustained. The then-President of Colombia, Cesar Gaviria, was only able to reach the site on June 8, two days after the initial disaster occurred. When he reached the area, he met with local disaster committees, the National Police, and the military, the latter two of which had a presence in the area. By June 9, a comprehensive damage assessment had been completed and President Gaviria declared a State of Emergency in the area of the disaster. The U.S. Ambassador to Colombia, Morris Busby, also officially declared a disaster, opening up USG response channels.

By June 11, OFDA began to provide a targeted response to the disaster, sending plastic sheeting for temporary shelter construction and individual-size water containers. OFDA/LAC's senior regional advisor also visited the area on June 11 and 12 to further assess the damage. The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) provided airlift support to evacuate the affected population and later carried supplies to shelters where the affected were residing. The airlifts continued from June 12-28.

The response to the Cauca/Huila event, which affected a total of 28,000 people, was a significant improvement over responses to similar disasters years earlier. One such earlier disaster was the 1985 Armero disaster, in which lahars (mudflows containing volcanic debris) killed 25,000 and destroyed the homes, property, and livelihoods of 30,000 individuals in the vicinity of the Nevado del Ruiz volcano. While the response needs in both disasters were similar, disaster agencies were much more efficient and organized in 1994. In 1985, the Nevado del Ruiz volcano had been monitored and the risks of disaster-causing activity were known within the monitoring agencies. However, this information was not disseminated to populations who would potentially be affected. This lack of coordination and organization also characterized the response, once the disaster had occurred. In 1994, however, DNPAD immediately activated its networks to organize an efficient and coordinated response.



Homes destroyed in 1985 by lahars near the Nevado del Ruiz volcano.

Because Colombia's disaster management capacity improved after the 1985 Armero disaster, local and national authorities were better able to manage the response to the Cauca/Huila earthquake. Therefore, Colombia's request for USG assistance was limited. During both disasters the affected populations needed temporary shelter, food, and water, as well as attention to health concerns. However, in 1994, the USG received more timely and accurate data from the Colombians and was, therefore, better able to target its response by providing only plastic sheeting, water containers, and evacuation/transport services. As a result, the total USG contribution was less than \$750,000 (\$690,778 of which was assistance provided by DOD, not OFDA). By comparison, the USG, through OFDA, responded with a total of \$2.7 million to the 1985 Armero disaster. When adjusted into 1994 dollars, this figure amounts to \$3.9 million. During the Armero disaster, five OFDA staff worked a total of 120 person-days in OFDA's assessment and response efforts. However, during the 1994 Cauca / Huila disaster, only OFDA / LAC's senior regional advisor traveled to the region and spent a total of five person-days in assessment and response efforts.

The growth in Columbia's disaster management capacity is a factor of the improved coordination among response agencies and their more closely synchornized conceptions of response needs and roles. This capacity is embodied

in a number of organizations, such as DNPAD, the Ministry of Health, the Civil Defense, the Colombian Red Cross, and scientific agencies such as INGEOMINAS (responsible for the National Seismological Network) and HIMAT (the Hydrology, Meteorology, and Land Adaptation Institute). Most of these organizations have received training from or directly adopted OFDA / LAC's DMTP. Employees of Colombia's DNPAD have been trained under the DMTP, and DNPAD has sponsored an OFDA / LAC course for its managers. Other local organizations involved in the disaster response effort and the Colombian Ministry of Health also have sent people to the DMTP, and the Colombian Red Cross has adopted all of the courses into its own training curriculum.

The successful response to the Cauca/Huila disaster demonstrated the various agencies' improved ability to provide a smooth flow of information, have a uniform definition of disaster needs and roles, and coordinate actions among themselves. OFDA/LAC training programs have helped these agencies gain a uniform working vocabulary and definition of concepts, as well as expand their skills to support a coherent approach to disaster response. All of this has created an enhanced institutional capacity to save lives and reduce human suffering.

Conclusion

When OFDA/LAC established relationships with disaster management and response organizations through its training and network building activities, it anticipated some of the benefits of its approach: the sustained development of improved and common management methods, greater technical expertise, and, ultimately, a greater degree of self-sufficiency in disaster preparedness and response. However, the DMTP and OFDA/LAC's network building efforts have had a greater impact than ever anticipated, with local, national, and regional actors replicating these efforts without OFDA/LAC's involvement. And therein lies a true achievement of Latin American and Caribbean disaster responders.

As a result of programs such as OFDA/LAC's DMTP, which have helped to build the region's disaster management capacity, Latin America and the Caribbean's need for outside assistance has declined over the last decade. Whereas the region previously relied heavily on USG and other outside assistance—as evidenced by the 1985 Armero disaster—its countries now request USG assistance less frequently and are better able to target the assistance that they receive.

As with outside response resources, the region's need for outside prevention, mitigation, and preparedness resources is diminishing. Although OFDA/LAC plans to continue its training and network building activities, it has found that some of its prevention, mitigation, and preparedness activities no longer require the same level of involvement that they previously did. This allows OFDA/LAC to concentrate on the areas of greatest need and to maximize the benefits of its prevention, mitigation, and preparedness resources. And just as the Latin American and Caribbean disaster responders have acknowledged their successes in increasing their self-sufficiency, OFDA/LAC has recognized its success in helping to build local disaster management and response capacities to the point that OFDA/LAC can invest its energies elsewhere.



PRIOR-YEAR AND NON-DECLARED DISASTERS

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Activities initiated in response to a disaster declaration often require additional funding for completion in subsequent fiscal years. In FY 1997, BHR/OFDA obligated a total of \$130,579 to replace commodities drawn down from BHR/OFDA stockpiles in FY 1996.

Costa Rica - Floods

Replacement and transport of water jugs to stockpile
BHR/OFDA Assistance \$15,120

Ecuador - Earthquake

Replacement and transport of wool blankets to stockpile
BHR/OFDA Assistance \$67,000

China - Floods

Replacement and transport of blankets and water jugs to stockpile
BHR/OFDA Assistance \$46,940

Palau - Accident

Assessment to determine the extent of damage on a collapsed bridge
BHR/OFDA Assistance \$1,519



FY 1997 Declared Disasters

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Disaster Summaries in this Annual Report

The disaster descriptions on the following pages cover the period of the USG's fiscal year, October 1, 1996 through September 30, 1997. During FY 1997, BHR/OFDA responded to 51 new "declared" disasters.

How a Disaster is Declared

The Chief of the U.S. Mission or the U.S. Department of State declares a disaster in the affected country once it is determined that the event or situation warrants a USG response. A disaster cannot be declared without a request from the host country for USG assistance. A disaster declaration allows the Chief of Mission to allocate up to \$25,000 (the "Ambassador's Authority") for host country relief efforts. BHR/OFDA releases the \$25,000 Ambassador's Authority from its International Disaster Account (IDA) and provides the Mission with guidance for determining the need for additional USG assistance. BHR/OFDA sends assessment teams to disaster sites when needed.

BHR/OFDA Assistance and Other USG Assistance

Many of the disasters in FY 1997 required a complex mix of USG financial and staff resources. The following disaster descriptions include total dollar figures for the assistance provided from BHR/OFDA's IDA, as well as summary information on assistance provided by other USG offices, such as BHR/FFP, USDA, DOD, and State/PRM. It is not always possible for BHR/OFDA to verify total assistance provided by other USG offices. However, wherever possible, State/PRM and BHR/FFP funding for regional grants, programs, and international appeals are listed separately.

Assistance Provided by U.S. PVOs and the International Community

Information included in the disaster descriptions on assistance provided by U.S. PVOs and the international community is compiled from reports submitted voluntarily to BHR/OFDA. It is not always possible to verify the accuracy of these reports.

Detailed Situation Reports, Fact Sheets, and Information Bulletins on Major Disasters Available Separately

BHR/OFDA produces documents which provide more detailed information about declared disasters than is provided in the case reports found in this annual report. Situation reports are 4-5 page documents updated on a regularly scheduled basis and written on long-term, complex emergencies (such as Rwanda or former Yugoslavia). Fact sheets are one page documents written on natural disasters and complex emergencies, which eventually may warrant information bulletins or situation reports. Information bulletins are 2-3 pages in length and written only on fast-onset, natural disasters, and are updated frequently: bi-weekly, weekly, or daily.

Situation reports, fact sheets, and information bulletins were written for the following major disasters in FY 1997:

[Angola](#) - Complex Emergency

[Burundi](#) - Complex Emergency

[Czech Republic](#) and [Poland](#) - Floods

[Democratic Republic of the Congo \(formerly Zaire\)](#) - Complex Emergency

[Former Yugoslavia](#) - Complex Emergency

Great Lakes Region - Complex Emergency

[Liberia](#) - Complex Emergency

[Rwanda](#) - Complex Emergency

[Sierra Leone](#) - Complex Emergency

[Somalia](#) - Complex Emergency

[Sudan](#) - Complex Emergency

Note: Historical as well as current situation reports, fact sheets, and information bulletins are available from BHR/OFDA upon request.



AFRICA

(Page 1 of 2)

Contents of this Page include information on the following declared disasters:

[Angola-Complex Emergency](#) | [Burundi-Complex Emergency](#) | [Central African Republic-Civil Strife/Displaced Persons](#)
[Chad-Drought](#) | [Chad-Epidemic](#) | [Democratic Republic of the Congo-Complex Emergency](#) | [The Gambia-Epidemic](#)
[Guinea-Bissau-Fire](#) | [Kenya-Drought](#) | [Liberia-Complex Emergency](#) | [Madagascar-Cyclone](#)

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ANGOLA

Complex Emergency

After 30 years of prolonged civil conflict, the Government of the Republic of Angola (GRA) and representatives of the National Union for Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) signed the Lusaka Protocol, a comprehensive peace agreement, on November 20, 1994. The protocol called for a cease-fire, the quartering and disarming of UNITA troops, and the formation of a unified national army. In return for its demilitarization, UNITA agreed to take part in a government of national reconciliation.

Although fighting officially ceased with the signing of the protocol, decades of accumulated hostility and mistrust set the stage for subsequent cease-fire violations. To help oversee the peace agreement, the U.N. Security Council authorized the establishment of a 7,500-member peacekeeping operation, the U.N. Angola Verification Mission III (UNAVEM III) in February of 1995. UNAVEM III's mandate expired on June 30, 1997, when the U.N. Security Council created the U.N. Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA). Due to continual delays in the peace process and enduring tensions between those areas controlled by UNITA and those under GRA control, large parts of the country remained insecure and isolated.

The success of Angola's efforts to move toward reconstruction depended on the reintegration of soldiers and their families into civilian life. By September 1996, more than 66,000 UNITA soldiers and 5,000 UNITA police, accompanied by over 120,000 civilian dependents, had been processed at 15 U.N.-supervised Selection and Demobilization Centers (SDC). The Rapid Demobilization Program began on April 12, 1997, and by the end of October a total of 34,890 former UNITA troops had been demobilized. A major cause for concern, however, was that over 30,000 registered troops subsequently deserted the SDCs. Many reportedly rejoined their military units.

Throughout FY 1997, the opening of roads for peacekeeping and humanitarian purposes continued to be hindered by thousands of unexploded mines, numerous destroyed bridges, and a lack of security in many parts of the countryside.

Nonetheless, IDPs in some provinces slowly began to return home, and targeted assistance programs were shifted to help them rebuild their lives.

While displaced populations in some regions began to return home, escalations in attacks and military activity in other regions produced new displaced populations throughout the year. The U.N. estimated that 3.3 million

Angolans could be classified as displaced and war-affected. Of this total, 1.2 million were IDPs, 1.8 million were war-affected, and approximately 300,000 were refugees.

Due to the continuing humanitarian need, a disaster declaration for FY 1997 was issued by U.S. Ambassador Don Steinberg on October 3, 1996. As the largest provider of humanitarian assistance to Angola, the USG has granted more than \$460 million to assist war-affected and displaced persons there since 1989. Since 1991, BHR/OFDA has funded an Emergency Disaster Relief Coordinator (EDRC) to oversee the USG's humanitarian programs and assist in the transitional efforts now underway in Angola.

During FY 1997, BHR/OFDA provided the majority of its assistance for activities through Africare, ACF, CRS, International Medical Corps, MSF/F, MSF/B, SC/US and WVRD. Funds were also provided to UNICEF and WFP. These agencies combined received over \$12 million to implement emergency relief programs ranging from health care and vaccinations to support for the SDCs and food distribution. Included in this amount was \$1.5 million in funding to WFP in support of its airlift operation and the transportation of non-food items. BHR/OFDA also gave \$295,200 to UNDHA's Angola Humanitarian Coordination Unit, which is responsible for coordinating the various U.N. agencies.

BHR/OTI provided over \$5 million in FY 1997 through grants to Creative Associates, CARE, and WVRD. BHR/OTI also transferred \$680,000 to Voice of America to fund a program dealing with conflict resolution. BHR/OTI programs focused primarily on demining and mine awareness activities, community revitalization, and conflict resolution. BHR/FFP provided 71,860 MT of P.L. 480 Title II food commodities, worth more than \$34.7 million, to CARE, SC/US, CRS, and WFP. BHR/FFP also provided 30,700 MT of Title I non-emergency food worth \$10 million. USAID's Bureau for Africa gave over \$16.8 million worth of disaster assistance during FY 1997, most of which was directed toward community rehabilitation projects, support for the quartering and demobilization of soldiers, and assistance to disabled war victims. State/PRM granted \$4 million to UNHCR to provide assistance to Angolan refugees. Through IMC, State/PRM also provided \$625,000 to support a health care center in Uige. (For additional information, the reader may request BHR/OFDA situation reports on "Angola-Complex Emergency.")

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$12,646,285
Other USG Assistance	\$72,005,871
Total USG Assistance	\$84,652,156

BURUNDI

Complex Emergency

When Melchoir Ndadaye, Burundi's first democratically-elected president as well as its first Hutu president, was assassinated in October 1993, nationwide ethnic violence erupted between Burundi's minority Tutsi and majority Hutu ethnic groups. The civil strife continued throughout FY 1997, manifesting itself in massacres and killings, population displacements, the forced regroupment of populations, pockets of food insecurity and malnutrition, limited political freedoms and the suspension of Burundi's constitution, and the continued rule of Burundi by Major Pierre Buyoya. Major Buyoya came to power in a coup d'état on July 26, 1996.

By the end of FY 1997, the Buyoya government still had failed to open talks with Burundi's opposition parties to negotiate an end to the country's civil conflict. Despite the Buyoya government's lack of progress, the USG continued throughout FY 1997 to respond to the humanitarian needs of those most affected by the country's unrest. On November 25, 1996, U.S. Ambassador Morris N. Hughes, Jr. re-declared a disaster in Burundi, opening the way for FY 1997 humanitarian assistance. In FY 1997, the USG also continued to provide asylum to former Burundian president Sylvestre Ntibantunganya until he left the U.S. Ambassador's residence on June 7.

Given the regional economic sanctions placed on Burundi and the Buyoya government's objectionable internal regroupment policy, the USG and other international donors struggled to provide appropriate assistance to Burundi during FY 1997. Throughout the year, the international relief community worked to deliver food, medicines, and supplies to 150,000 returnees and IDPs, two million people in hospitals and health centers, 100,000 farmers, and 250,000 regrouped persons.



Action Aid's shelter rehabilitation project in Ruyigi Province, funded by BHR/OFDA. Photo by Regina Tooley, BHR/OFDA.

Throughout FY 1997, regional leaders maintained the sanctions that they had placed on imports to Burundi in August 1996 in response to the coup d'état. Although the sanctions constrained the implementation of humanitarian relief programs, they did not prevent the humanitarian relief community from providing assistance. In fact, many humanitarian goods and supplies already had been exempted from the embargo list by April 16, 1997, when African leaders met in Arusha, Tanzania with Major Buyoya. The regional leaders further eased the sanctions by lifting the embargo on all food and non-food products, all items related to education and construction materials, as well as all types of medicines and all agricultural items and inputs.

During the same meetings, the leaders at Arusha also called for the disbandment of Burundi's regroupment camps. The Buyoya government's policy of forced regroupment of Burundians began in Karuzi Province in March 1996, but during FY 1997 it spread to Bujumbura Rurale, Bururi, Kayanza, Cibitoke, Bubanza, and Muramvya provinces. More than 250,000 Burundians were forced to live in the camps in FY 1997.

The humanitarian community and the USG conducted a series of diplomatic missions, camp visits, and discussions regarding ways to provide appropriate assistance in such circumstances. In May 1997, in response to the government's regroupment policy, USAID Administrator Brian Atwood and European Union Commissioner Emma Bonino released a joint policy statement that included guidelines restricting the provision of humanitarian assistance to temporary emergency activities. The guidelines further required that the assistance would be provided only after a needs assessment was conducted and that the assistance would not support any efforts to regularize life in the regroupment camps. At the same time, the USG—in Burundi and in the U.S.—spoke out vociferously against the regroupment practice.

In addition to suffering forced relocation, the population in the camps was at risk of deteriorating health due to the effects of crowding, inadequate potable water, poor sanitation, lack of medical care, and inaccessibility to farm land. Despite Buyoya government pronouncements that the large regroupment camps would be closed by September 1997 if security conditions could be guaranteed in surrounding areas, most of the camps remained at the end of FY 1997.

Insecurity also remained throughout many areas of Burundi in FY 1997. On December 11, 1996, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights José Ayala Lasso reported that more than 1,000 people had been massacred in Burundi between late October and late November 1996. Then, on January 29, 1997, U.N. human rights monitors accused the Burundian army of killing at least 1,000 people in a seven-week period during December and January.

In addition to causing internal displacements, insecurity in Burundi and in the former Zaire generated refugee flows throughout the region in FY 1997. As the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire swept through the refugee camps in the former Zaire in October and November 1996, Burundian refugees living in the camps began returning home. By the end of FY 1997, all but 40,000 of the 143,000 Burundians living in the former Zaire had returned.



With funding from BHR/OFDA, IRC installed this water tap stand to provide adequate water to the Karuzi Province regroupment camp's 13,000 residents. Photo by CWT Hagelman III, BHR/OFDA.

However, while the flow of Burundian refugees into the former Zaire reversed course, the flow of refugees to Tanzania increased throughout the year. Over the course of the year, the number of Burundian refugees living in Tanzania increased by nearly 150,000. Some of the increase was due to Burundian refugees fleeing the former Zaire and moving to refugee camps in Tanzania, but much of it resulted from fighting and insecurity within Burundi. As the population in the refugee camps in Tanzania grew, so did the tensions between the Buyoya government and the Government of Tanzania (GOT). The Buyoya government believed that the camps were harboring rebels who used the camps as a base for their operations, while the GOT denied the existence of such activities.

Because of the continued insecurity that has besieged Burundi in one area or another over the past four years, the population's coping mechanisms have degenerated. In response, relief organizations have continued to target aid programs at efforts to combat Burundi's widespread malnutrition and worsening food security and health situations. Throughout the year, various NGOs reported serious malnutrition in nearly all of Burundi's provinces. Additionally, an FAO/WFP study found that civil strife, population displacement, and the regional economic embargo had reduced food supplies and increased food prices, thereby increasing the country's food insecurity. Finally, a WHO analysis of the typhus outbreak in Ngozi, Muramvya, and Kayanza provinces concluded that this outbreak of typhus was the worst in the world since World War II. Between January and March 1997, more than 20,000 typhus cases were reported.

BHR/OFDA's assistance to Burundi during FY 1997 amounted to more than \$11 million. BHR/OFDA funding helped NGOs and U.N. agencies implement emergency medical and health interventions, shelter rehabilitation, therapeutic and supplementary feeding programs, seed multiplication and agricultural assistance activities, water/sanitation activities, and airstrip expansions. The funding also helped support food security assessments and follow-on food distributions. In addition, BHR/OFDA maintained an Emergency Disaster Relief Coordinator in Burundi to coordinate the USG humanitarian response to the conflict in Burundi and to monitor the progress of the various USG-funded relief activities.

Due to the regional nature of the complex emergency in the countries of the Great Lakes region—Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zaire, and Uganda—BHR/FFP and State/PRM have contributed food aid and refugee assistance on a regional basis. Some of the assistance has been provided to Burundian refugees; however, to avoid double counting, this assistance has been included in the Rwanda case report as assistance to the Great Lakes Regional Crisis.

(For additional information, the reader may request BHR/OFDA situation reports on "Great Lakes-Complex Emergency" or view them on-line at www.info.usaid.gov/ofda/situation.html .)

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$11,029,649
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CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Civil Strife/Displaced Persons

Three armed mutinies, punctuated by sporadic outbreaks of violence, erupted in the Central African Republic after April 1996. Renewed civil unrest occurred again in late June 1997 and drove an estimated 50,000_60,000 residents of the capital, Bangui, to outlying villages, some of which were nearly 60 km away. As a result of the renewed fighting, more than 100 people were killed, and an increased number of diarrheal diseases, particularly among children, were reported. The displaced population also suffered from a serious lack of shelter, food, drinking water, latrines, and medicines in host communities.

On July 8, U.S. Ambassador Mosina H. Jordan declared a disaster in response to the increasing needs of the displaced persons. BHR/OFDA provided \$25,000 to UNICEF through the U.S. Embassy in Bangui to purchase essential drugs and medical equipment, as well as to build 200 latrines.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$25,000
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CHAD

Drought

For two consecutive years, crops failed in Chad's northern Sahel region. As early as July 1996, the U.S. Embassy in N'Djamena had noted that the lack of rainfall could lead to reduced food production, and in September 1996, USAID/Famine Early Warning System (FEWS) predicted large cereal production shortfalls. In November 1996, three separate assessments performed by USAID/FEWS, the EU's early warning system, and FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System pointed to acute food shortages in seven of Chad's 14 prefectures, especially in the area north of the 14th parallel, which extends from Kanem Region in the west to Ouaddai in the east. By November 1996, national cereal reserves had been depleted and on-farm stocks north of the 14th parallel had been consumed. Malnutrition and child mortality rates threatened to rise. An estimated 624,000 people were affected.

On December 10, 1996, U.S. Ambassador David C. Halstead declared a disaster. BHR/OFDA responded by providing an initial \$25,000 to ACF through USAID/N'Djamena to fund the continued operation of four therapeutic feeding centers and 15 distribution centers in Kanem Region until the September 1997 harvest. The target population was 77,000 women and children, many of whom had been abandoned by the male heads of household. BHR/OFDA subsequently provided an additional \$332,000 to ACF to allow the centers to continue operating. BHR/FFP provided 5,380 MT of corn to WFP for relief in Kanem and Lac regions. The food was valued at over \$3.2 million.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$357,000
Other USG Assistance	\$3,237,000
Total USG Assistance	\$3,594,000

CHAD

Epidemic

In 1997, a cholera outbreak characterized by a dramatically rising number of cases and deaths struck 11 of Chad's 14 prefectures, severely affecting Majo Kebbi, Logone Occidental and Oriental, and Chari Baguirmi, which includes N'Djamena. From late March to late August, the Government of Chad (GOC) reported nearly 8,500 cases and 400 cholera deaths. The outbreak, which was associated with inadequate preventive measures, peaked in the month of June, with over 1,400 cases and 60 deaths reported.

In order to avoid a major epidemic and in response to two appeals from the GOC, U.S. Ambassador David C. Halsted declared a disaster on June 11. BHR/OFDA responded by providing \$25,000 to the U.S. Embassy in N'Djamena, which released the funding to MSF/B. MSF/B used the funds to provide logistical support and procure local commodities to control cholera in remote, outlying areas. The DOD Security Assistance Office provided an additional \$10,000 to MSF/B to purchase local items used to equip one of its cholera treatment centers. A shipment of medical supplies valued at \$4,500 was also donated in early July by the U.S. European Command Humanitarian Assistance Program. The number of reported cases dropped after July, although sporadic cases continued to be reported, especially in areas of poor drainage. MSF/B medical teams remained active in affected areas, focusing on improved sanitation and access to potable water.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$25,000
Other USG Assistance	\$14,500
Total USG Assistance	\$39,500

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Complex Emergency

The root of the current crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DROC) is deeply seated in history. Its origins exist in the settlement of Banyarwanda and Banyamulenge (people of Rwandan origin) in North and South Kivu more than 200 years ago, and the tensions have stretched from sporadic ethnic violence between indigenous Zaireans and those of Rwandan origin to the more recent Zairean government and military supported harassment of the Banyarwanda. Tensions in the area were further exacerbated in 1994 by the arrival of approximately one million Rwandan refugees and in 1995 by the apparent attempts of members of the former Rwandan army (the ex-FAR) and the Rwandan Hutu militia (the Interahamwe), living as refugees in eastern Zaire, to create an area of Hutu control.

When the South Kivu Deputy Governor declared on October 8, 1996 that Banyamulenge residents should leave the area within seven days or risk being treated as rebels, fighting broke out between the Banyamulenge and the FAZ (Zairean army). On October 13, 1996, the FAZ launched attacks on the many Rwandan and Burundi refugee camps along the border area in North Kivu and South Kivu. In South Kivu, the first camp to fall was Runingo, and by month's end the majority of the camps had been overrun, forcing roughly 220,000 refugees to flee. In North Kivu, the operation was less swift; but by early November, the Rwandan refugees housed in Katale, Kahindo, and Kibumba camps had fled, heading into the forests or re-congregating in Mugunga and Lac Vert camps. Shortly thereafter, the Banyamulenge joined with other opposition forces to form the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (ADFL), and Laurent Desiré Kabila was named the spokesman of the Alliance. Forced out of Mugunga camp by a direct ADFL attack on November 15, approximately 550,000 Rwandan refugees began a mass repatriation. Many others, including thousands of ex-FAR and Interahamwe, fled further west into the dense forests of Zaire.

Although many refugees scattered in the forests, others regrouped themselves at new camps: Tingi-Tingi and Amisi in the north and Shabunda in the south. However, advancing ADFL troops and continued fighting prevented humanitarian relief workers from reaching the refugees. Consequently, the health conditions in the camps were

deplorable—malnutrition was high, disease was prevalent, and mortality rates were alarming, especially for children under the age of five. The presence of many young men in the camps lent credence to reports that the militia remained amongst the refugees.

As the ADFL campaign advanced in the early months of 1997, the Zairean troops retreated westward, looting and pillaging as they went. Fearing the approaching FAZ, the refugees fled further westward as well. By the spring of 1997, the ADFL movement had displaced nearly 200,000 Zaireans—in addition to the 376,590 Rwandans that UNHCR estimated to be dispersed throughout eastern Zaire. On March 15, 1997, the ADFL seized Kisangani, thereby enabling relief organizations initial access to refugee populations that subsequently gathered along the rail line south of Kisangani. However, the ADFL soon offered only irregular access to the refugees and sometimes barred it entirely.

In some instances, the ADFL requested that relief organizations tend to groups of refugees, only to cut off access to the refugees once the refugees felt it safe to come out of hiding and seek assistance. When the relief organizations were allowed to return, the size of the population had often greatly diminished, and local NGOs and citizens spoke of massacres by the ADFL. The attacks on the refugees further weakened their already-frail health. The situation necessitated that the humanitarian community act immediately, once they regained access, to save the lives of the remaining refugees. The humanitarian community did so by airlifting more than 64,000 refugees from Kisangani and Mbandaka to Rwanda.

The ADFL campaign continued throughout April and early May. By May 17, 1997, Kinshasa fell to the ADFL. Kabila subsequently renamed Zaire the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DROC), and was inaugurated as president on May 29.

On November 12, 1996, U.S. Ambassador Daniel H. Simpson declared a disaster in Zaire as a result of the violent breakup of the refugee camps. A BHR/OFDA team assessed the situation within Zaire from February 12-26, 1997. In follow up, BHR/OFDA deployed a USAID/DART to the region on March 14 to advance relief efforts for refugees, local populations, and IDPs in eastern Zaire. The USAID/DART members were based in Goma, Kisangani, and Nairobi and traveled throughout the country to assess and report on humanitarian conditions and provide funding to international organizations, U.N. agencies, and NGOs. One of the USAID/DART's members served as a liaison officer and was instrumental in facilitating the relief community's access to areas previously declared off-limits by the ADFL.

The USAID/DART provided more than \$10 million in grants in FY 1997 to respond to the humanitarian needs within the DROC. The USAID/DART funded programs to address the immediate needs of refugees, including wetfeeding centers, emergency health interventions and medical assistance, repairs to potable water systems, and care for unaccompanied children. The majority of the USAID/DART's assistance, however, went toward programs to assist the return of IDPs to their homes and the reintegration of IDPs into their communities.

Toward this end, BHR/OFDA funded the airlift of IDPs from Kisangani to Bukavu and Goma, seeds and tools distributions, and the repair of water systems and health centers in some of the more damaged areas. Following the USAID/DART's departure on June 30, BHR/OFDA placed a field officer in Goma until early December to assess, evaluate, and monitor both the humanitarian conditions in eastern DROC and the progress of OFDA-funded projects. In addition, BHR/OTI contributed over \$1 million in FY 1997 to the DROC, particularly for the establishment of regional hubs to facilitate the return of civil society.

Due to the regional nature of the complex emergency in the Great Lakes, BHR/FFP and State/PRM contributed food aid and refugee assistance on a regional basis for Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda, and the DROC. In FY 1997, BHR/FFP donated 92,910 MT of P.L. 480 emergency Title II food commodities worth approximately \$65 million to WFP for displaced persons and refugees in the Great Lakes region. Of this amount, WFP indicated that 8,015 MT of food valued at more than \$1 million would be earmarked for the DROC. State/PRM provided nearly \$63 million to the Great Lakes regional crisis in FY 1997. In large part, these funds were provided to UNHCR for the care, protection, and repatriation of Rwandan refugees in the DROC. To avoid double counting, this regional assistance has been included in the Rwanda case report as assistance to the Great Lakes Regional Crisis.

(For additional information, the reader may request BHR/OFDA situation reports on “Great Lakes–Complex Emergency” or view them on-line at www.info.usaid.gov/ofda/situation.html.)

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$10,733,302
Other USG Assistance	\$1,041,912
Total USG Assistance	\$11,775,214

THE GAMBIA

Epidemic

In the first few months of 1997, the incidences of type A and C meningitis began to rise in The Gambia. By April, the incidence of the disease had reached particularly alarming levels in the country's eastern river divisions. With more than 90 deaths directly related to meningitis, U.S. Ambassador Gerald W. Scott declared a disaster in The Gambia on April 3 to allow USG funds to be used in efforts to deter the spread of the disease. In response, BHR/OFDA provided \$25,000 to WHO in support of a national meningitis campaign, undertaken in cooperation with UNICEF and the local Ministry of Health. WHO used the funds to purchase medical equipment and vaccines and to provide medical treatment to the targeted at-risk population.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$25,000
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GUINEA-BISSAU

Fire

In the village of Dar Salaam, Tombali region, two boys playing with the seeds of a baobab tree accidentally set a fire by burning the seeds. The fire spread rapidly, fueled by thatched roofs and bamboo furniture, and left 211 people temporarily homeless. The fire also killed an estimated 203 domestic animals and destroyed grain stores containing two tons of rice. The local health center also was damaged.

On May 29, 1997, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Robert L. Fretz issued a disaster declaration and BHR/OFDA responded by providing \$15,200 through USAID/Bissau to the U.S.-based PVO Africare. Funds were used for the local purchase of materials to repair fire-damaged homes, and beneficiaries contributed the necessary labor. Funds also were used to purchase bamboo beds and to procure livestock and fowl to replace animals lost to the conflagration.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$15,200
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KENYA

Drought

Kenya was struck by a severe drought in early January 1997 following the failure of three consecutive rainy seasons. The drought caused widespread crop failure, water scarcity, and deteriorating pasture and rangeland conditions. An estimated 1.6 million people living in the northeastern area of Kenya, including pastoralists and those living in marginal agricultural districts, were seriously affected. This was Kenya's second drought crisis in five years.

In late January, the Government of Kenya (GOK) officially declared a drought emergency and decided to lift heavy duties on commercial imports of maize, milk, and rice. As a result, U.S. Ambassador Prudence Bushnell declared a disaster in Kenya on January 30. BHR/OFDA immediately provided \$25,000 to USAID/Nairobi, which donated it to the British NGO WaterAid to repair damaged boreholes. Additionally, BHR/OFDA provided more than \$1.7 million in grants to ADRA, CARE, the Intermediate Technology Development Group, UNICEF, and World Concern to support various innovative drought relief and recovery projects in northern Kenya, including a project to improve food security through the vaccination, supplemental feeding, and restocking of livestock. BHR/OFDA also provided \$56,982 to fund a disaster relief manager to serve as coordinator within the USAID/Nairobi drought coordination unit. BHR/FFP provided WFP with 5,800 MT of commodities valued at more than \$2.5 million.



World Concern staff vaccinate camels under a BHR/OFDA-funded program to improve food security among drought-affected pastoralists in Kenya. Photo by Melinda Rapp Wolfe, BHR/OFDA.

Several U.N. agencies and NGOs immediately implemented relief and rehabilitation activities in affected areas. In February, WFP approved an emergency operation valued at \$12.4 million and borrowed and purchased food from the Ethiopian Grain Reserve. The timely intervention by the donor community and the onset of the rains during late March and early April prevented a large-scale crisis, although maize prices subsequently remained high throughout Kenya.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$1,857,942
Other USG Assistance	\$2,520,100
Total USG Assistance	\$4,378,042

LIBERIA

Complex Emergency



A local WVRD representative stands by a field of sweet potatoes being used to train farmers in Bong County. With funding from BHR/OFDA, WVRD is training returnee farmers on agricultural methods in this experimental program. Photo by Karma Lively, BHR/OFDA.

After nearly seven years of fighting, instability, and 13 broken peace agreements, a cease-fire in Liberia finally held in late 1996. The cease-fire was negotiated under an amended implementation schedule for the Abuja Peace Accord and signed on August 17, 1996. As part of the Abuja Accord, signed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) heads of state and Liberian faction leaders, democratic elections were scheduled to be held on May 30, 1997. Elections, however, were postponed until July 19, and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia's (NPFL) leader, Charles Taylor, was elected President of Liberia. With more than 80% of the 700,000 registered voters participating in the elections, Taylor received 75% of the total vote in an election that was deemed by international observers to be free and fair. His NPFL party won 21 of 26 seats in the Senate and 49 of 64 seats in the Assembly. Although Liberia returned to civilian rule, a significant proportion of the population remained unable to provide for their own basic humanitarian needs. On October 1, 1996, U.S. Ambassador William Milam re-declared a disaster for Liberia for FY 1997.

On June 27, 1997, the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) unanimously adopted UNSCR 1116, a resolution extending the mandate of the U.N. Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) until September 30, 1997. UNOMIL's military observers served as elections monitors during the July 19 elections.

In FY 1997, BHR/OFDA and relief agencies were able to reach regions of Liberia that had been inaccessible due to insecurity throughout much of the war. Improved security in Liberia allowed BHR/OFDA to perform an assessment of its overall assistance program in January 1997, and in March 1997, BHR/OFDA hired a local agricultural monitor to provide ongoing assessments and report on agricultural activities with an EU counterpart and NGO/U.N. implementing partners.

NGOs and U.N. agencies extended their emergency programs in agriculture, food, health, and water/sanitation activities to newly accessible areas of the country and assisted former combatants to reintegrate into their communities. Liberia faced the challenge of repatriating more than 500,000 refugees and nearly one million IDPs, including 33,000 former combatants. In September 1997, USAID joined in a national reintegration program, under which activities in support of repatriation and resettlement were started. These activities included reconstructing schools, clinics, and medical facilities; repairing farm-to-market roads; and implementing agricultural projects such as swamp rice cultivation, warehousing, and food processing.

A bumper rice harvest during 1996 was due to the improved security situation in the two main rice producing areas of Liberia, areas which had benefitted from NGO distributions of seeds and tools provided to local farmers by BHR/OFDA and the EU's Food Security Unit. In an effort to promote agricultural recovery, grantees supported by BHR/OFDA designed programs that promoted self-reliance and sustainability for targeted farmers, using incentives such as seed payback and exchange schemes, seed banks, and technical assistance and farmer training.

In late March, a BHR/OFDA team assessed its ongoing health activities and made recommendations for BHR/OFDA funding in Liberia's health and nutrition sectors. In health, BHR/OFDA supported programs that restored critical outpatient clinical services, particularly in the rural areas of resettlement. Grantees were expected to use cost-recovery to ensure the sustainability of their programs. WVRD received a grant from BHR/OFDA to provide training, nutritional rehabilitation, and primary healthcare in Nimba, Grand Gedeh, Cape Mount, and Bomi counties. ACF/F, under a BHR/OFDA grant, provided therapeutic and supplementary feeding for malnourished children and targeted distribution for pregnant and lactating women in Monrovia, Buchanan, Gbarnga, Tubmanburg, and rural areas of Grand Bassa and Rivercess counties.

In FY 1997, BHR/OFDA's contribution of more than \$8.6 million addressed the needs of vulnerable groups through grants to Africare, ACF/F, CRS, Lutheran World Relief, MDM, SCF/UK, WVRD, UNHCR, UNICEF, and VITA. BHR/FFP provided nearly \$23.2 million to WFP and CRS to deliver 42,060 MT of emergency food assistance to war-affected populations throughout Liberia.



An infant is weighed at a BHR/OFDA-funded ACF/F nutritional feeding center on the road to Buchanan. Vulnerable children are provided with special feedings and their progress is monitored with frequent weighings at the feeding center. Photo by Karma Lively, BHR/OFDA.

BHR/OTI's funding, totaling more than \$1.7 million, supported independent, non-factional radio coverage to all geographic locations in Liberia and border areas, as well as civil reconstruction activities. USAID's Bureau for Africa/Office of West African Affairs provided more than \$7.2 million to assist war victims (including IDPs, child soldiers, and disabled ex-combatants) through community reintegration activities such as trauma counseling, skills development, non-formal education, and the provision of agricultural kits.

State/PRM funded a grant to IRC (\$243,026) to assist Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire and provided regional grants to IRC and ARC to assist Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees in Guinea (see "Sierra Leone_Complex Emergency"). State/PRM also contributed \$5 million to UNHCR under a special repatriation appeal for Liberian refugees in Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria. The appeal assisted the refugees with their transport back to Liberia and helped to re-integrate them once in Liberia. State/PRM also contributed in FY 1997 to the Africa-wide general appeals of UNHCR, ICRC, and IFRC. To avoid double counting, State/PRM funding for these appeals has been included in the Sierra Leone case report.

(For additional information, the reader may request BHR/OFDA situation reports on "Liberia-Complex Emergency.")

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$8,639,925
Other USG Assistance	\$37,348,523
Total USG Assistance	\$45,988,448

MADAGASCAR

Cyclone



Employees sort legal records outside the Secretariat building in Farafangana, which was badly damaged by Cyclone Gretelle. Photo by Liz Lukasavich, BHR/OFDA.

On January 24, 1997, Cyclone Gretelle struck the southeastern coast of Madagascar, causing severe damage to local housing and infrastructure before exiting through the southwest coast. Approximately 570,000 people were affected, including some 64,000 displaced persons and 280,000 people who were cut off after roads, bridges, and electricity telephone links were destroyed. An estimated 200 people were reported dead or missing and nearly 90% of administrative and health care buildings were toppled by the cyclone's torrential rains and maximum wind speeds of 200 km/hour. The winds and widespread flooding also decimated thousands of hectares of crops and food stocks in the rich farming zone of the southeast. Contaminated drinking water and lack of access to food posed a serious threat to the affected population. Cyclone Gretelle was the seventh tropical storm to hit the island nation since the start of the cyclone season in October 1996 and the worst cyclone in living memory, exceeding even the damage wreaked by Cyclone Bonita in 1996.

Citing the extensive damage caused by the cyclone along the southeast coast of Madagascar and in response to a Government of Madagascar (GOM) appeal, U.S. Ambassador Vicki J. Huddleston declared a disaster on January 28. BHR/OFDA allotted \$24,550 to USAID/Antananarivo, and the Mission subsequently released it to CARE to carry out road repair and water purification activities in the most severely affected areas. In February, a two-member BHR/OFDA team of disaster relief specialists also carried out a previously planned damage and needs assessment in affected areas. Various donors, U.N. agencies, and NGOs also responded through a coordination system established by the GOM. Despite a fall in yields as a result of the cyclone, Madagascar enjoyed a good overall harvest in 1997-1998, due mainly to good climatic conditions following the cyclone.



A house in Farafangana destroyed by the force of Cyclone Gretelle. Photo by Liz Lukasavich, BHR/OFDA.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$24,550
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AFRICA

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MALAWI

Floods

In February 1997, ten days of heavy rainfall caused severe flooding in the Lower Shire Valley of southern Malawi. The floods caused an estimated 300,000 people to evacuate their homes and affected an estimated 400,000 people through loss of food stores, crops, or homes. Fifty thousand of the registered victims were flood-affected Mozambicans from the province of Zambesia. Assistance needs included food, shelter, blankets, medical supplies, water, agricultural inputs, and bridge reconstruction. The flooding caused many of the roads to be inaccessible, hindering the distribution of relief materials. On February 16, President Bakili Muluzi declared the Lower Shire Valley a disaster area after viewing the damage, and on February 18, he requested urgent assistance from donors.

On February 19, U.S. Ambassador Peter R. Chaveas officially declared a disaster for southern Malawi. In response, BHR/OFDA disbursed a \$25,000 grant through USAID/Lilongwe to the Malawi Red Cross Society. The grant was used to transport relief supplies to the affected area and to provide shelter to displaced persons.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$25,000
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MAURITANIA

Drought

Poor rainfall distribution in the summer of 1996 caused crops to fail in Brakna Province of south-central Mauritania, a region where most of the population is dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods. In January 1997, an interagency mission concluded that the food security and general well-being of an estimated 200,000 people in eight provinces would be at-risk—possibly of famine-related deaths—if assistance were not provided to the most affected areas. Among the mission's findings was an acute malnutrition rate of 25% among children.

On February 5, U.S. Ambassador Dorothy Myers Sampas declared a disaster. BHR/OFDA responded by providing

\$25,000 through the U.S. Embassy in Nouakchott to Doulos Community, the leader of an umbrella NGO community. The funds were used to buy and deliver food and to support other costs associated with opening therapeutic feeding centers for severely malnourished children under five years of age. BHR/FFP provided 360 MT of mixed commodities to Doulos and 4,000 MT of sorghum to WFP. The commodities were valued at more than \$1.7 million.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$25,000
Other USG Assistance	\$1,763,500
Total USG Assistance	\$1,788,500

MOZAMBIQUE

Floods

After nearly two weeks of heavy rains in the region, the Zambezi, Chire, and Pungue rivers and their tributaries flooded in Mozambique's Zambezia, Tete, Manica, and Sofala provinces in early February. Seventy-eight people were killed, 300,000 were affected, and hundreds of hectares of farmland were destroyed. Many of the victims crossed into neighboring countries to escape the flooding.

On February 19, 1997, the Government of Mozambique (GOM) declared a disaster and specifically requested food, medicine, seeds, and clothing for flood victims. Most of the people who evacuated or were displaced by the flooding lost all their possessions, and in many cases, their homes.

On February 21, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Michael McKinley declared a disaster. BHR/OFDA responded by providing \$24,652 through USAID/Maputo to the international NGO Development Aid from People to People (ADPP). ADPP used the grant to distribute clothing packets to needy families in Sofala Province, where approximately 128,000 people were affected. The BHR/OFDA funds provided 24,600 people with clothing.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$24,652
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RWANDA

Complex Emergency

On April 6, 1994, the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi were killed when their plane was shot down as it approached Kigali, the Rwandan capital. Immediately following the crash, government forces and armed militias launched a premeditated, systematic campaign to exterminate the minority Tutsi and moderate Hutu populations. Simultaneously, government forces and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) engaged in a civil war. By the time the RPF (a rebel movement composed primarily of exiled Tutsis) claimed victory and a new government was installed in late July, more than 500,000 people had been killed, two million had become displaced in Rwanda, and another

two million had fled to neighboring countries. Most refugees remained encamped in neighboring countries through FY 1996, despite a few sporadic repatriations.



A CRS food distribution site for returnees in Gisenyi Prefecture. Photo by Regina Tooley, BHR/OFDA.

FY 1997 was marked by a mass repatriation of Rwandan refugees from the former Zaire and Tanzania. From November 14 through December 1996, over 550,000 Rwandan refugees repatriated from the Goma-area camps in the former Zaire as a result of fighting that began in mid-October between the Zairean army (FAZ) and Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (ADFL), led by Laurent Desiré Kabila. Approximately 535,000 Rwandan refugees also repatriated from Tanzania by the end of 1996, including more than 470,000 who repatriated between December 14-31. The majority repatriated following a December 5 decree by the Government of Tanzania which required all Rwandan refugees to depart from Tanzanian soil by year's end. During the spring of 1997, another 200,000 Rwandan refugees repatriated from the former Zaire as the battlefield moved westward and as Kisangani fell to the ADFL. After Kabila's troops seized Kinshasa on May 17 and the country was renamed the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DROC), groups of Rwandan refugees began to emerge sporadically from their hiding places in the forests and return to their homeland. In addition to the new caseload refugee return, 750,000 old caseload refugees (who fled Rwanda in 1959 and 1963) had repatriated since the war's end in 1994.

In response to the onset of the war in South Kivu, Zaire, BHR/OFDA deployed a USAID/DART to Kigali, Rwanda on October 26, 1996. The USAID/DART immediately began to assess the readiness of the relief community to respond to the possibility of a mass refugee return. Once the return began, the USAID/DART was poised to follow the situation on the ground, supply information updates to USAID/Washington, and provide funding to relief organizations for programs to assist with refugee repatriation and resettlement.

The months that followed the mass repatriation of refugees witnessed a steady increase in the level of violence within Rwanda, focused primarily in the northwestern prefectures. Members of the former Rwandan army (ex-FAR) and the Rwandan Hutu militia (Interahamwe), who repatriated alongside the refugees, were suspected of committing much of the violence. Beginning in January 1997, the humanitarian community was targeted by insurgents, thus impacting the security of relief operations and the ability to carry out projects. Among those targeted and killed were employees of Médicos del Mundo (a BHR/OFDA-funded NGO), members of the U.N. Human Rights Field Operation in Rwanda (UNHRFOR), and a priest. During the last four months of FY 1997, the insurgency in the northwest further escalated. On August 22, 1997, insurgents in Gisenyi Prefecture attacked the Mudende refugee camp, which housed approximately 15,000 refugees. One hundred forty-eight refugees were killed and 80 were wounded. This event led to increased fear and mistrust among the population.

On November 7, 1996, U.S. Ambassador Robert E. Gribbin III re-issued a disaster declaration for FY 1997 in light of the refugee crisis in eastern Zaire and the possible mass return of Rwandan refugees. The declaration allowed for USG humanitarian assistance in the event that a wide-scale refugee return overwhelmed the Government of Rwanda (GOR). On November 18, the USG pledged \$140 million in humanitarian and development assistance to address needs in the Great Lakes region. Of this amount, \$20 million was set aside from BHR/OFDA for humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance inside Rwanda for FY 1997. The USAID/DART remained in place until February 26, 1997, at which time a program officer was placed in the USAID mission to monitor BHR/OFDA-funded programs and provide reporting to OFDA/Washington.

In FY 1997, BHR/OFDA provided nearly \$25 million to humanitarian organizations working in Rwanda to address immediate needs in the way stations along the returnee routes; assist in the care and reunification of unaccompanied minors; and establish programs focusing on reintegration, in particular, the rehabilitation of shelter, health centers, water systems, and the agricultural sector. Some new shelters were also constructed. In addition to program funding, BHR/OFDA also provided in-kind contributions. BHR/OFDA supplied 13,300 blankets and 675 rolls of plastic sheeting (enough to shelter 12,000 families) to UNHCR. In a departure from its traditional response, BHR/OFDA provided the Ministry of Health with 20 WHO emergency health kits to assist 200,000 people for three months and provided the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration with communication equipment to enhance coordination efforts among prefectures.



Rwandan refugees, who had fled into the forest in the DROC after the camps in North Kivu Province were disbanded, begin heading east on the road from Masisi to Rwanda. Photo by Regina Tooley, BHR/OFDA.

In FY 1997, BHR/OTI contributions in Rwanda totaled more than \$3.5 million. These funds were used to support the UNHCR, which deployed staff members throughout Rwanda to monitor human rights and work with GOR officials to promote reconciliation. In addition, the funds were used to support a women's transition project, an assessment of various justice projects, local news coverage of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), and a local governance initiative.

Due to the regional nature of the complex emergency in the Great Lakes, BHR/FFP and State/PRM contributed food aid and refugee assistance respectively on a regional basis for Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda, and the DROC. In FY 1997, BHR/FFP donated 92,910 MT of P.L. 480 emergency Title II food commodities worth approximately \$65 million to WFP for displaced persons and refugees in the Great Lakes region. Of this amount, WFP indicated that 26,269 MT of food commodities valued at nearly \$3.6 million would be earmarked for Rwanda. State/PRM provided nearly \$63 million to the Great Lakes regional crisis in FY 1997. These funds helped to finance reintegration programs in Rwanda, refugee assistance in and repatriation from neighboring countries, and community-based projects for returnees.

From the beginning of the crisis in 1994 through FY 1997, USG humanitarian assistance to Rwanda totaled more than \$161 million. During the same period, the USG provided approximately \$1 billion to the Great Lakes regional crisis.

(For additional information, the reader may request BHR/OFDA situation reports on "Great Lakes-Complex Emergency" or view them on-line at www.info.usaid.gov/ofda/situation.html)

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$26,150,280
Other USG Assistance	\$3,569,288
Total USG Assistance	\$29,719,568
BHR/FFP Assistance for Great Lakes Regional Crisis	\$65,015,600
State/PRM Assistance for Great Lakes Regional Crisis	\$62,887,700

SIERRA LEONE

Complex Emergency

After six years of civil war, a peace accord was signed in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire on November 30, 1996. The signatories were the recently elected government of President Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and the opposition Revolutionary United Front (RUF), led by Foday Sankoh. Despite a military cease-fire, Kabbah's government and the RUF continued to disagree on issues related to the demobilization of soldiers and support for local civil defense militias, who sided with Kabbah and opposed the RUF.

On May 25, 1997, junior army officers violently seized power, forcing the Kabbah government to flee to Guinea and plunging Sierra Leone back into upheaval. The military junta, known as the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), freed and armed many prisoners, including Major Johnny Paul Koroma, who was imprisoned for an attempted coup in September 1996. Major Koroma assumed the leadership of the AFRC. After Foday Sankoh accepted an invitation to join the AFRC, many RUF soldiers joined forces with the AFRC.



A beneficiary receives vegetable oil at a WVRD food distribution center in Kenema supported in part by BHR/OFDA. Photo by Karma Lively, BHR/OFDA.

The international community, including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and the U.N. immediately demanded that the AFRC restore the Kabbah government. On June 26, ECOWAS foreign ministers met in Conakry, Guinea and agreed to work through a progressive set of measures, namely dialogue, imposition of sanctions, enforcement of embargoes, and the use of force to achieve the reinstatement of the legitimate government.

Before the AFRC coup d'état in May, tens of thousands of IDPs and refugees had returned to their homes. UNHCR had implemented a formal repatriation program for Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea and Liberia. However, repatriation was suspended in late April, following renewed fighting. Fighting and insecurity subsequently displaced thousands of Sierra Leoneans. Up to 60,000 new refugees registered with UNHCR in Guinea as well as an additional 25,000 refugees in Liberia. A significant number of Sierra Leoneans also fled to neighboring countries but failed to register as new refugees. Due to the continued suffering of the populace and the need to provide emergency humanitarian assistance, U.S. Ambassador John Hirsch re-declared a disaster for Sierra Leone on October 1, 1996, for FY 1997.

Following the seizure of power in May by the AFRC, all USG personnel, including the BHR/FFP officer stationed in Sierra Leone, were evacuated from Sierra Leone to Guinea. BHR/OFDA continued to support limited, targeted humanitarian assistance through its implementing partners in Sierra Leone with local and/or expatriate staff.

Although the last harvest produced a good yield, distribution of the crops in the markets was adversely affected by continued insecurity and the limited supply of gasoline due to an embargo imposed by ECOWAS. As a result of the AFRC's takeover of the government, at least 200,000 people throughout Sierra Leone were in need of food assistance at the end of FY 1997, according to WFP. Many vulnerable people were located in hospitals, clinics, orphanages, or displaced in urban centers. The vulnerable were receiving food through CRS, WVRD, CARE, and WFP programs.



ACF/F completes a borehole well with BHR/OFDA funding in Bo. Photo by Karma Lively, BHR/OFD.

In FY 1997, BHR/OFDA provided more than \$5.8 million in grants to ACF/F, CRS, Africare, WVRD, ICRC, MSF/H, and UNICEF for emergency interventions in water/sanitation, medical and nutritional assistance, health activities, food distribution, seeds and tools, and agricultural support. The bulk of these funds were provided prior to the renewed conflict and were originally intended for resettlement and rehabilitation activities. Before the May coup d'état, BHR/OFDA planned to phase out emergency funding by the end of 1997.

In January 1997, BHR/OTI began a two-year program (\$3 million) in support of Sierra Leone's transition to peace and democratic governance. These initiatives, however, ended with the rise in instability in May.

During FY 1997, BHR/FFP contributed 29,370 MT of emergency food commodities to CARE, CRS, WVRD, and WFP. The commodities were valued at approximately \$17.4 million, including internal transport, shipping, and handling costs.

In addition to supporting IRC/Guinea and ARC regional grants assisting Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees in Guinea, a portion of State/PRM's program contributions was used to assist returning Sierra Leoneans. State/PRM also contributed in FY 1997 to the Africa-wide general appeals of UNHCR, ICRC, and IFRC.

(For additional information, the reader may request BHR/OFDA situation reports on "Sierra Leone-Complex Emergency" or view them on-line at www.info.usaid.gov/ofda/situation.html)

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$5,862,276
Other USG Assistance	\$20,435,117
Total USG Assistance	\$26,297,393
State/PRM Regional Assistance to West Africa	\$612,163

SOMALIA

Complex Emergency

Despite numerous peace talks, violent fighting between clan-based factions vying for power and territory continued in Somalia for the sixth consecutive year. As in previous years, the fighting was fiercest in the capital, Mogadishu, where many civilians were killed or wounded in the crossfire. The political instability, coupled with a lack of purchasing power and rising unemployment and commodity prices, also affected already-vulnerable populations throughout the country (particularly urban IDPs). Severe flooding and two consecutive poor harvests due to drought caused a sharp drop in 1996-1997 cereal production levels, creating serious food shortages in the agriculturally rich areas of the south. According to U.N. estimates, more than 1.25 million Somalis remained dependent on emergency food aid, including approximately 600,000 returnees, 250,000 IDPs, and an estimated 409,360 who were refugees in neighboring countries.

Donor-funded efforts to respond to the poor humanitarian situation in Somalia continued in spite of the ongoing insecurity, poor road conditions due to heavy rains, and continued closure of the port and airport in Mogadishu. In early 1997, the international donor community developed a multi-sectoral program in drought-affected areas in southern Somalia. U.N. agencies, NGOs, and local health authorities also collaborated on successful cholera and measles prevention and control programs in Somalia. However, in late 1996, relief agencies in Mogadishu temporarily halted non-critical programs in the city following the abduction of a Somali aid worker who was later released. Relief and development activities also were suspended in the Bay Region after the June killing of an international staff member in Baidoa, the southern region's capital. In contrast, the self-declared "Somaliland" republic in northwest Somalia remained secure and self-sufficient, despite some random acts of banditry.

On October 24, 1996, U.S. Ambassador Prudence Bushnell renewed the disaster declaration for Somalia in light of the continued complex emergency and current and projected needs in Somalia for FY 1997. Consistent with the USG's policy to remain active in Somalia, BHR/OFDA contributed over \$6 million in FY 1997 to address the needs of vulnerable groups throughout Somalia, through drought relief activities, health care, and water and sanitation activities. Of this total, \$1.5 million was provided to WFP to provide air transport within Somalia. BHR/FFP provided 3,620 MT of food commodities valued at more than \$2.3 million and also made use of monetization funds and commodities as well as distribution commodities from previous years. Additionally, in FY 1997, USAID/Somalia obligated a total of \$4 million for grants and for the FEWS program. State/PRM and BHR/FFP provided food aid and refugee assistance on a regional basis; however, to avoid double counting, this assistance has been included in the Sudan case report.

(For additional information, the reader may request BHR/OFDA situation reports on "Somalia-Complex Emergency.")

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$6,055,599
Other USG Assistance	\$6,368,100
Total USG Assistance	\$12,423,699

SUDAN

Complex Emergency

Fighting intensified in Sudan in early 1997 as southern- and northern-based opposition movements united forces to capture many government-held areas. Hundreds were killed and thousands displaced as the allied forces seized several towns in Sudan. However, rebel victories in the south also allowed an estimated 100,000 Sudanese to leave displaced camps in Sudan and refugee camps in Uganda to return to their homes. Fighting continued among southern-based rebel movements, after six southern factions aligned with the government in April. Overall, more than 2.5 million Sudanese remained internally displaced due to the fighting, including 2.2 million in Khartoum and 1.8 million in the transitional zone and southern areas. Additionally, there were an estimated 209,000 Sudanese refugees in Uganda, 110,000 in the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire), 78,000 in Ethiopia, 28,000 in Kenya, and 27,000 in the Central African Republic. Sudan hosted an estimated 349,000 Eritreans, 51,000 Ethiopians, 4,400 Chadians, and 10,000 refugees of various origins. Many refugees and war-affected Sudanese remained vulnerable to recurrent droughts, flooding, and frequent outbreaks of diseases, including measles, cholera, and sleeping sickness. Among the most vulnerable were the Sudanese returnees who lacked the resources to resume livelihood activities immediately upon their return.

Humanitarian activities continued during FY 1997 largely under the U.N.-managed Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) consortium that includes over 30 NGOs. Unfortunately, severe funding shortfalls and Government of Sudan (GOS)-imposed restrictions on humanitarian flights to areas in southern Sudan and restrictions on the use of high-capacity C-130 aircraft prevented the timely delivery of humanitarian aid by OLS to vulnerable groups, including the returnees. The GOS also continued to carry out aerial bombardments of civilian targets, including NGO compounds in southern Sudan. NGO staff were frequently targeted in hijackings, abductions, and looting. In late 1996, ICRC suspended its program in Sudan after an ICRC aircraft and four expatriate staff, including one American, were detained for 38 days by forces aligned with the GOS. The suspension remained in place throughout FY 1997. Minor restrictions imposed by southern rebel forces further affected humanitarian access to some areas. However, rebel advances early in the year allowed OLS to transport relief supplies and personnel by road via Uganda for the first time in many years.



Community-based animal health workers vaccinate cattle against Rinderpest through a ADRA veterinary health care program near Kimatong funded by BHR/OFDA. Photo by John Marks, USAID/Nairobi.

On October 28, 1996, U.S. Ambassador Timothy Carney renewed the disaster declaration for Sudan for FY 1997, stating that continued U.S. assistance was required to assist war-affected and displaced Sudanese. In FY 1997, USG-funded humanitarian programs in Sudan promoted continuing emergency relief to populations at risk, while at the same time providing rehabilitation assistance that builds local capacity to meet their own needs. This goal was captured under the USG Integrated Strategy Plan (ISP) for Sudan 1997-1999, which was finalized in June under the leadership of BHR/OFDA and which seeks to combine all USG resources under one strategic framework, as requested by the President's Greater Horn of Africa Initiative. Under the Sudan ISP, BHR/OFDA, BHR/FFP, and State/PRM staff in Washington continued to collaborate with the USAID/Regional Economic Development Services Offices/Sudan Field Office, USAID/Khartoum, and U.S. Embassy officials located in Nairobi to plan and monitor USG-funded programs in Sudan.

In FY 1997, BHR/OFDA provided more than \$22.2 million in grants to support OLS and various relief and rehabilitation interventions in affected areas. In FY 1997, BHR/FFP contributed 35,860 MT of P.L.480 Title II emergency food valued at more than \$27.6 million to Sudan through WFP and several NGOs. An additional 30,000 MT of Title II food commodities valued at more than \$15.4 million was provided to support Sudanese refugees in Uganda.

Due to the regional nature of the complex emergency in the Horn of Africa, BHR/FFP and State/PRM contributed food aid and refugee assistance on a regional basis. In FY 1997, BHR/FFP contributed 23,790 MT of food commodities valued at more than \$13 million to WFP to support Somali and Sudanese refugees in neighboring countries. Additionally, State/PRM contributed over \$92 million to UNHCR, IFRC, ICRC, and IRC to assist refugees, including Somalis and Sudanese, in the region.

(For additional information, the reader may request BHR/OFDA situation reports on "Sudan-Complex Emergency" or view them on-line at www.info.usaid.gov/ofda/situation.html)

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$22,276,953
Other USG Assistance	\$43,125,000
Total USG Assistance	\$65,401,953
BHR/FFP Regional Assistance for Sudanese and Somali refugees	\$13,389,900
State/PRM Assistance for Refugees in the Region	\$92,000,000

UGANDA

Civil Strife

Northern Uganda has suffered from civil unrest since the early 1980s. As the conflict between the Government of Uganda (GOU) forces and armed insurgent groups intensified in late 1996, the GOU military began encouraging rural people in affected areas to move into protective camps. However, the military provided only a short period for the move and undertook little preparation for the influx of people to the protective camps. As a result, many people did not have adequate time to harvest their crops or gather their farming tools, and the camps into which they moved lacked adequate sanitation, health, and shelter facilities and had insufficient food and water. In addition, assistance from local and international NGOs was constrained by the insecurity in the area. By early 1997, more than one quarter of the population of Gulu and Kitgum districts in northern Uganda was estimated to have been displaced.

To ameliorate the suffering and potential outbreak of disease among the people internally displaced by the civil strife, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Wayne Bush declared a disaster on February 5 for five districts destabilized by the conflict in northern Uganda: Gulu, Kitgum, Moyo, Arua, and Nebbi. In response to this request for assistance, BHR/OFDA provided \$25,000 through USAID/Kampala to WVRD for improvements in sanitation facilities for IDPs in Gulu District. BHR/OFDA followed this with a \$360,131 grant to WVRD to implement food security and water and sanitation programs in Kitgum and Gulu districts. The program was estimated to have benefitted 120,000 persons.



Joe Gettier, USAID/Nairobi's Food for Peace Officer, visiting a displaced camp in Atanga, northern Uganda. Photo by Tamra Halmrast-Sanchez, USAID/Afric Bureau.

In addition, BHR/OFDA granted \$278,978 to AICF/USA for an emergency water and nutrition program in Gulu District. The program was designed to serve 51,000 IDPs for seven months. BHR/OFDA also granted \$25,000 to the Agency for Cooperation and Development (ACORD) to distribute seeds and tools to more than 14,000 IDPs in Gulu District. More than 33% of the IDP families served by the emergency food security program were female-headed households that had no agricultural inputs for that growing season. BHR/OFDA also provided funding for a disaster relief coordinator to be based in Kampala for several months.

On August 5, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Carol Colloton expanded the disaster declaration issued in February to cover the southwestern districts of Bundibugyo, Kasese, Kabarole, Rukungiri, Kisoro, and Bushenyi. In expanding the declaration, Chargé d'Affaires Colloton cited the intensified conflict in southwestern Uganda caused by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels. The ADF rebels, based in the Rwenzori Mountains, reportedly committed atrocities against the local civilian population, driving them from their homes and farms in the mountains into lowland towns. As the IDP population in the region grew to approximately 70,000 people, food became more scarce and the towns became unable to absorb them. Bundibugyo town swelled to more than twice its normal size. The area was endemic for cholera and shigella; most of the health staff in the area had fled or were unable to work; and concern grew that epidemics would occur. BHR/OFDA responded to the declaration by granting \$196,000 to MSF/US to provide emergency health, sanitation, resettlement, and shelter services to 38,000 IDPs in Bundibugyo town.

During FY 1997, BHR/FFP provided funding to respond to commodity assistance needs generated by the conflict in Uganda. BHR/FFP provided over 3,400 MT of commodities valued at more than \$2.4 million, including shipping

and handling costs. State/PRM also provided food aid and refugee assistance on a regional basis. Some of this assistance benefitted Ugandan refugees; however, to avoid double counting, this assistance has been included in the Sudan case report.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$905,109
Other USG Assistance	\$2,460,200
Total USG Assistance	\$3,365,309



ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Contents of this Page include information on the following declared disasters:

[Bangladesh-Cyclone](#) | [Burma-Floods](#) | [Cambodia-Floods](#) | [India-Cyclone](#) | [Laos-Typhoons/Floods](#)
[Mongolia-Floods](#) | [North Korea-Food/Emergency](#) | [Vietnam-Typhoons/Floods](#)

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BANGLADESH

Cyclone

On May 19, 1997, a cyclone that created sustained winds of up to 159 km/hour struck Bangladesh in the districts of Chittagong and Cox’s Bazaar. More than 1.1 million people in the two districts were affected, with 69 persons dead and 7,042 injured. The storm damaged more than 200,000 homes and caused the loss of 1,899 cattle.

As a result of the devastation, U.S. Chargé d’Affaires Nancy J. Powell issued a disaster declaration on May 22. BHR/OFDA responded by providing \$25,000 to the U.S. Embassy, which awarded a grant to CARE to transport and distribute 14,000 emergency survival packets to storm victims. The packets consisted of plastic sheeting, rope, jerrycans, cups, plastic bowls, candles, matches, and oral rehydration salts. BHR/OFDA also provided \$134,600 on June 6 to replenish CARE’s stockpile of emergency survival packets, which had been depleted by the rapid commodity deployment in response to the storm.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$159,600
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BURMA

Floods

Monsoon rains in Burma during July and August 1997 caused flooding along the Ayeyarwaddy, Chindwin, Thanlwin, Thantwe, Sittaung, and Yangon rivers and their tributaries. Nine of Burma’s 14 states and divisions were affected, with Mon State and Bago and Ayeyarwaddy divisions being the hardest hit. In these three locales alone, approximately 103,650 people from 20,851 households lost their homes, livestock, agricultural implements, or household and personal belongings. In total, more than 140 people died as a result of the flooding. In addition, thousands of acres of paddy fields sustained damage, thus affecting the rice crop. Because transportation links were destroyed, relief efforts were difficult to conduct.

U.S. Chargé d’Affaires Marilyn A. Meyers declared a disaster on September 2, 1997, and BHR/OFDA responded by providing \$25,000 through the U.S. Embassy in Rangoon to World Vision International for emergency flood relief in Waw Township of Bago Division. The funds helped to provide a one-month supply of basic food and essential household items, namely, cooking utensils, blankets, and mosquito nets.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$25,000
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CAMBODIA

Floods

From mid-September through early October 1996, torrential rains in the upper Mekong River Basin precipitated severe flooding in the provinces of Ratanakkiri, Kratie, Stung Treng, Kompong Cham, Prey Veng, Kandal, Phnom Penh, Svay Rieng, Takeo, Banteay Meanchey, and Pursat. The floods claimed 59 lives and affected approximately 1.3 million people by destroying homes, drowning livestock, and damaging schools, health centers, roads, bridges, dams, and irrigation systems. The majority of flood victims were subsistence rice farmers. More than 130,000 hectares of rice paddies were destroyed, leaving at least 584,000 people facing immediate food shortages. The loss of the forthcoming harvest and the lack of seeds for future planting seasons raised concerns that additional people would be affected in the coming months.

On October 1, 1996, U.S. Ambassador Kenneth Quinn declared a disaster and BHR/OFDA responded by providing \$25,000. This funding was channeled through the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh to the American Red Cross to purchase plastic sheeting, clothing, and food for victims in the most severely affected areas.

BHR/OFDA Senior Regional Advisor Thomas O. Brennan travelled to Cambodia on October 24, 1996, to assess the extent of the damage and need for further USG assistance. In response to Brennan’s recommendations, BHR/OFDA allocated an additional \$22,000 to WFP on November 14, 1996. This funding supported a flood relief and mitigation project in northeastern Cambodia, implemented through local food-for-work schemes in approximately 200 villages. The objectives of these food-for-work projects were to rehabilitate damaged community infrastructure such as wells, local irrigation structures, and schools; to restore basic transport links among villages, major roads, and district centers; and to mitigate against future food shortages by creating community ponds for the growth of subsidiary crops.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$47,000
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INDIA

Cyclone

A cyclone hit the region of Andhra Pradesh on November 6, 1996, killing 716 people, leaving 321,000 families homeless, and damaging crops and public buildings. On November 12, 1996, U.S. Chargé d’Affaires Matthew P.

Daley declared a disaster. In response, BHR/OFDA provided a \$25,000 grant to the prime minister’s national relief fund through USAID/Delhi. The grant supported relief and humanitarian activities in the West and East Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$25,000
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LAOS

Typhoons/Floods

In September 1996, three typhoons hit Laos in rapid succession, causing record flooding in the southern and central regions of the country. An estimated 30% of the crops in these regions were lost and 420,000 people were affected. Two hundred forty-three thousand people lost their entire food supply; approximately 177,000 of them lost their harvest for two or more consecutive years. A longer term effect of the flood is the reduction in the food stockpiles and seed available for future growing seasons. The affected regions also suffered serious infrastructural damage, primarily to irrigation systems and roads. The ability of the Government of Laos to respond to the disaster was limited, particularly since government resources were stretched by the response to earlier floods in the north of the country.

On October 8, 1996, U.S. Ambassador Wendy Jean Chamberlin declared a disaster. BHR/OFDA responded by providing \$25,000 through the U.S. Embassy in Vientiane to fund a grant to WVRD to distribute water pumps and implement food-for-work programs. On November 22, 1996, BHR/OFDA granted an additional \$103,033 to WVRD to expand its support of the same flood relief objectives.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$128,033
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MONGOLIA

Floods

Localized sections of Bayanhongor Aimag were ravaged by floods on July 19, 1997. Thirteen people died from the effects of the floods, approximately 20 families lost their homes, and more than 5,100 animals were lost. Bayanhongor Aimag, which is located 630 km from Mongolia’s capital, Ulaanbaatar, is an extremely poor province of Mongolia with a poverty rate almost twice that of the national poverty rate.

In response to the Government of Mongolia’s appeal for assistance, U.S. Ambassador Llewellyn Hedgbeth declared a disaster on August 7, asking for assistance for flood victims. BHR/OFDA responded by providing \$25,000 to the Mongolian Red Cross (MRC) through USAID/Ulaanbaatar. The MRC used BHR/OFDA’s assistance to rehabilitate *gers* (round, felt tent housing) and to purchase animals and vegetable seeds for poor families affected by the floods. BHR/OFDA subsequently provided an additional \$25,000 to continue support of the relief programs implemented by the MRC.

NORTH KOREA

Food/Emergency

Throughout FY 1997, North Korea/Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) continued to suffer from extreme food shortages and generalized economic decline. Chronic and systemic deficiencies exacerbated by several years of back-to-back natural catastrophes left millions vulnerable to malnutrition, opportunistic disease, and starvation.

Floods caused by torrential rains swept through the southwestern and northwestern regions of the DPRK in the summer of 1995, damaging over 400,000 hectares of arable land, destroying crops, and leaving 500,000 people homeless. The DPRK estimated losses at \$15 billion. The humanitarian crisis continued in 1996 and was once again aggravated by flooding in the same areas in late July 1996. The July 1996 floods left at least 30,000 people homeless and caused an additional \$1.7 billion in damage to crops and infrastructure, according to DPRK estimates. As a result of the flooding and subsequent food shortage, WFP estimated that nearly 2.5 million women and children in the DPRK were at serious risk of starvation.



Farmers work to provide irrigation water to fields adversely impacted by floods. Photo by Dr. Brent Burkholder, CDC.



Congressman Tony Hall (D-OH) discusses alternative food sources with local women. Photo by Dr. Brent Burkholder, CDC.

BHR/OFDA began disaster relief activities in the DPRK in September of 1995 with a \$25,000 grant to UNICEF to carry out a measles vaccination program in flood-affected areas. BHR/OFDA continued to fund relief activities throughout FY 1996 by providing a grant to UNICEF for supplemental feeding and by contributing \$2 million toward WFP's international appeal for food assistance.

As the humanitarian crisis worsened in FY 1997, BHR/OFDA continued to closely monitor the situation. In April 1997, BHR/OFDA provided funding to send CDC epidemiologist Brent Burkholder to the DPRK as part of a U.S. congressional delegation led by Rep. Tony Hall (D-OH). In August, BHR/OFDA provided funding to send CDC epidemiologist Ali Mokdad to serve as a team leader on a joint WFP/UNICEF survey designed to measure the scope of malnutrition in the DPRK. On September 29, based on reporting from these field visits, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Charles Kartman declared a disaster for FY 1997 due to the continuing and severe food shortages and the collapse of the DPRK's health care system.

During FY 1997, USAID continued to provide humanitarian assistance to the DPRK through BHR/FFP. In response to WFP's 1997 international appeal for food assistance, BHR/FFP provided 122,000 MT of food aid valued at \$37 million. The food aid included corn, corn-soya blend, and rice. BHR/FFP also supplied 55,000 MT of corn, worth \$15 million, outside the WFP appeal. Monitoring of this aid was conducted by a consortium of US-based PVOs that included CARE, WVRD, Mercy Corps, CRS, and Amigos Internacionales.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$20,217
Other USG Assistance	\$52,000,000
Total USG Assistance	\$52,020,217

VIETNAM

Typhoons/Floods

Between July and November 1996, Vietnam suffered a series of typhoons, floods, and tropical storms which affected the central, northern, and southern provinces. In October, heavy rains caused flooding in the southern Mekong Delta provinces of An Giang, Dong Thap, Tay Minh, Long An, Tien Giang, Kien Giang, Can Tho, and Vinh Long. The effects of the flooding within these provinces were devastating: 162 people were killed, more than 750,000 houses were submerged, at least 26,000 hectares of rice crop were destroyed, and approximately 800,000 head of livestock were lost. Clinics, schools, and transportation networks also were severely damaged.

On October 10, 1996, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Desaix Anderson declared a disaster in Vietnam. BHR/OFDA responded by providing \$25,000 through the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi to the Vietnam Red Cross Society. This funding was used for emergency assistance to the most severely affected families in the southern provinces of the Mekong Delta.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$25,000
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EUROPE AND THE NEAR EAST

Contents of this Page include information on the following declared disasters:

[Afghanistan-Complex Emergency](#) | [Albania-Emergency](#) | [Czech Republic-Floods](#) | [Former Yugoslavia-Complex Emergency](#)
[Iran-Earthquake \(Feb.\)](#) | [Iran-Earthquake \(May\)](#) | [Northern Iraq-Complex Emergency](#) | [Poland-Floods](#) | [Tajikistan-Epidemic](#)

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AFGHANISTAN

Complex Emergency

In September 1996, the Taliban movement seized control of most of Afghanistan and succeeded in capturing the capital, Kabul. Although the takeover granted Kabul's residents a respite from factional fighting that had besieged the city for more than two years, devastation resulting from years of fighting continued to be responsible for the lowest standard of living in the world outside of Africa. According to UNHCR, some 2.7 million Afghan refugees—the largest single caseload of refugees in the world—remained abroad. Another 1.5 million Afghans remained internally displaced, according to the U.S. Committee for Refugees. More than 250,000 people were newly displaced in the months following the Taliban's capture of Kabul. ICRC reported that Afghanistan had one of the world's highest concentrations of land mines, and a 1997 UNICEF survey revealed that nearly all children in Kabul had witnessed acts of violence.

On November 4, 1996, Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Robin L. Raphel declared that a disaster existed in Afghanistan. The disaster declaration cited ongoing civil conflict, the refugee and IDP situation, the country's near-bottom ranking on the U.N. Human Development Index, the danger of increased fighting, and the onset of winter. On December 3, 1996, international aid agencies launched an appeal for \$133 million for assistance to Afghanistan.



BHR/OFDA is supporting ICRC's agricultural rehabilitation programs in the Tagab Valley of central Afghanistan. In the background is a recently-rehabilitated field benefitting returnees in the valley area. Photo by Dr. Bradley Woodruff, CDC.

BHR/OFDA responded to the declaration with a grant to ICRC of \$438,883 for general rehabilitation activities such as the provision of locally-produced stoves, heaters, quilts, and clothing items to assist the return of displaced families. ICRC's general rehabilitation program was implemented in combination with an agricultural rehabilitation program, to which BHR/OFDA contributed an additional \$363,558, to help displaced families return to their homes with water source rehabilitation, seeds, tool production and distribution, fruit production support, and livestock vaccination, as well as with mine awareness training.

Additionally, BHR/OFDA provided ICRC with \$500,000 for a water/sanitation project, including the rehabilitation of 10,000 home latrines, wells, and water pumps. Linked with this project were a community health education component and the resumption of traditional waste collection.

To help Afghanistan's war-ravaged population survive the winter, BHR/OFDA provided \$400,000 to ICRC's supplemental winter appeal to distribute coal, charcoal, plastic sheeting, tarpaulins, tents, candles, and matches to some 30,000 vulnerable families in Kabul. BHR/OFDA also gave \$150,000 to the United Nations Center for Human Settlements (Habitat) to provide shelter and relief items to destitute families in Kabul, especially widows. In addition, BHR/OFDA provided Habitat with \$500,000 for shelter rehabilitation, including the recycling of destroyed materials, to benefit some 5,600 residents and 500 workers, and solid waste removal in Kabul to benefit some 32,000 residents and 300 workers. An additional \$5,764 supported a BHR/OFDA assessment of winter needs in Kabul.

Finally, BHR/OFDA gave IFRC a grant of \$500,000 to procure, transport, and distribute blankets, cooking sets, and plastic sheeting to 13,000 disaster-affected families and gave \$100,000 in support of the Afghan Red Crescent Society's 46 health clinics, which provided basic and emergency health services country-wide.

BHR/FFP provided 70,000 MT of food aid valued at more than \$28.7 million to Afghanistan. State/PRM contributed \$920,000 to relief organizations assisting Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Because these funds were for programs assisting Afghan refugees, they are considered part of the total USG assistance to Afghanistan. In addition, State/PRM contributed more than \$7.3 million for programs within Afghanistan. State/PRM also gave \$18.3 million in funds to regional refugee assistance programs that benefitted Afghan refugees.



Beneficiaries assist in an ICRC sanitation rehabilitation project funded by BHR/OFDA in Kabul. Photo by Dr. Bradley Woodruff, CDC.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$2,958,205
Other USG Assistance	\$36,940,600
Total USG Assistance	\$39,898,805
State/PRM Assistance to the Region	\$18,300,000

ALBANIA

Emergency

Following the collapse of a series of high-risk investment schemes in late 1996, Albania was plunged into armed chaos in March 1997. Individuals and families who suffered significant financial losses protested the government's suspected complicity in these numerous pyramid schemes, and demonstrations escalated into violence after large quantities of weapons were looted from national military armories. More than 2,000 people were seriously wounded and 180 people killed in Tirana and other major cities. Hospitals throughout the country coped with quickly depleting stocks of basic medicines and medical supplies in response to the unprecedented violence. Thousands fled the lawlessness and economic collapse by paying to be transported by boat across the Adriatic Sea to Italy. Government food stocks stored in warehouses throughout the country were looted, causing a disruption of food supplies to government social institutions, including hospitals, orphanages, and homes for the handicapped, mentally retarded, and the elderly.

On March 24, U.S. Ambassador Marisa Lino declared a disaster because of the civil unrest. BHR/OFDA answered the request and provided \$25,000 to CRS through USAID/Tirana to purchase bed linens needed by hospitals that had experienced an influx of patients as a result of the armed violence.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$25,000
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CZECH REPUBLIC

Floods

From July 6-9, 1997, torrential rains fell in the eastern portions of the Czech Republic, affecting major cities such as Ostrava, Olomouc, Opava, Otrokovice, Prerov, and the surrounding areas. The heavy rains caused widespread flooding of several rivers and forced thousands to flee their homes. Transportation and communications infrastructures were badly damaged, croplands were destroyed, and water supplies over a wide regional area were contaminated. The floods were the worst natural disaster to hit central Europe in decades. In the Czech Republic, 39 people were killed, 2,500 were injured, and 50,000 inhabitants were evacuated from their homes.



A house destroyed by floodwaters in Kłodzko, Czech Republic. Photo by Stephanie Fritz, BHR/OFDA.



A helicopter overflight reveals the extent of flooding near the Morava and Ostravice rivers. Photo by Stephanie Fritz, BHR/OFDA.

On July 9, U.S. Ambassador Jennone R. Walker declared a disaster due to the effects of the flood damage. BHR/OFDA immediately provided \$101,880 to the Czech Red Cross to transport and distribute humanitarian relief supplies, including tents, blankets, drinking water, hygiene items, and emergency food supplies. During the weekend of July 19-20, additional rains caused another wave of flooding, forcing many to leave their homes for the second time in two weeks.

BHR/OFDA dispatched a team, including two representatives from DOD, to the Czech Republic from July 19-24 to assess additional needs and make recommendations on possible USG interventions in response to the floods. The team recommended that BHR/OFDA assist in the transport of donated hepatitis A vaccines from the United States. BHR/OFDA provided for the transport of the vaccines (\$36,176) from the United States to the Czech Republic. The total cost of dispatching the assessment team was \$46,157.

FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Complex Emergency

The existence of large numbers of IDPs, a lack of adequate shelter and infrastructural support for returnees, and a generally poor economic situation all contributed to the continuation of the humanitarian emergency in FY 1997 in the former Yugoslavia. Even as the countries of the former Yugoslavia struggled to care for the needs of the IDPs, many of whom lived in sub-standard conditions and remained dependent upon humanitarian aid for daily survival, the return of refugees from neighboring countries placed added demands on already scarce resources. The return of refugees from Germany and Switzerland exacerbated housing shortages, adding to already existing ethnic tensions in areas where minorities had returned. In some locations, homes that were being repaired for returnees were destroyed, thereby preventing the return of minority populations.

A disaster was re-declared in FY 1997 for Bosnia-Herzegovina (B-H), the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), and Croatia, due to the lack of security for minority populations and the lack of food, infrastructure, winterization, and sanitation resources. U.S. Chargé d’Affaires for Bosnia-Herzegovina Michael Parmly declared a disaster for B-H on October 1, 1996. U.S. Chargé d’Affaires for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Richard M. Miles followed with a disaster declaration for the FRY on October 4, 1996; and U.S. Chargé d’Affaires for Croatia Robert Finn issued a disaster declaration for Croatia on October 9, 1996.



A Kosovar Albanian family receives relief commodities provided through BHR/OFDA at a Mother Teresa Society distribution center outside of Pristina, Kosovo. Photo by Mariza Artificio-Rogers, BHR/OFDA.

In FY 1997, an estimated 1.4 million Bosnians remained in refugee and IDP status, and refugees returned at a much slower rate than expected. During the latter part of the year, however, refugee returns reflected the goals of the Dayton Agreement, with many minority populations returning to their homes in areas where they continued to be a minority. Persistent housing shortages limited the number of returns and posed logistical problems for the implementation of repatriation programs. Some cities showed initiative in accepting returnees, but other towns’ leaders expressed concern about the possibility of further displacement of IDP populations generated by refugee returns. The lack of resources also posed difficulties for communities. Without adequate infrastructure, as well as economic opportunities, creating a sustainable livelihood remained a problem for residents as well as returnees in many municipalities.

In Kosovo, the humanitarian situation remained dire for 12,000-15,000 Krajina refugees and two million ethnic Albanians. Responding to food and winterization needs was among the highest priorities of international donor agencies. BHR/OFDA was the primary donor in the area, providing \$5.7 million in relief assistance in FY 1997. The rest of the FRY continued to experience severe economic difficulties as well, and in the Republic as a whole, 548,000 refugees and IDPs remained.

In Croatia, the regions of Eastern Slavonia and Krajina continued to experience ethnic tensions between minority populations and Croatians. However, 7,000 Croatian Serbs left Eastern Slavonia in FY 1997 to return to their homes in other parts of Croatia, and 1,500 IDPs returned to Eastern Slavonia.

Municipal elections were held in Bosnia-Herzegovina in September 1997. As a result of the elections, IDPs gained representation in a number of municipalities. Despite some irregularities, the elections were peaceful and were

declared valid. The NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR) played a crucial role in stabilizing the region during the year, particularly in Republika Srpska (one of the two entities—the other is the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina—that make up the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina). Part of SFOR’s role was to maintain an environment suitable to freedom of movement and freedom of the press.

The USAID/DART completed its mission to the former Yugoslavia on September 30, 1997. The USAID/DART had been in the region for five years and had offices in Zagreb and Sarajevo, and sub-offices in Tuzla and Split.

In FY 1997, BHR/OFDA obligated more than \$19.6 million in emergency humanitarian assistance to the former Yugoslavia. Distributed through its PVO/NGO partners, BHR/OFDA funds assisted refugees, IDPs, the elderly, and other vulnerable populations by meeting needs in the areas of winterization, basic agriculture, health, water, and shelter. WVRD, Children’s Aid Direct, MCI, Première Urgence, CARE, IRC, and CRS were some of BHR/OFDA’s partners in providing humanitarian assistance to the former Yugoslavia in FY 1997. These organizations distributed commodities such as fuel, stoves, blankets, seeds and tools, and hygiene kits and assisted in shelter and water system repairs with grants from BHR/OFDA.



A technician for IMC prepares to administer shots to children in central Bosnia. The expanded program of immunization is funded by BHR/OFDA. Photo by Mikaela Meredith, BHR/OFDA.

BHR/FFP provided approximately \$43.7 million in Title II food assistance to B-H in FY 1997, distributed through grants to the American Red Cross, CRS, ADRA, International Orthodox Christian Charities, and WFP. BHR/OTI also provided assistance to the former Yugoslavia. In FY 1997, 550 grants were given to indigenous media and civil society organizations to support democratic governance and the development of civil society. BHR/OTI provided \$7.6 million in FY 1997.

Other USG agencies and offices also provided assistance to the former Yugoslavia. USAID/ENI provided nearly \$131 million in assistance for reconstruction, economic stabilization, and democratic reform programs. State/PRM contributed \$78 million to UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), WHO, and a number of other international organizations and NGOs to assist the repatriation of refugees. DOD/PK/HA provided 450,000 humanitarian daily rations to Belgrade and Zagreb, 7 containers of medical and school supplies, and 21 Denton shipments, totaling more than \$2.4 million in aid to the former Yugoslavia.

(For additional information, the reader may request BHR/OFDA situation reports on “Former Yugoslavia – Complex Emergency.”)

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$19,687,811
Other USG Assistance	\$262,968,660
Total USG Assistance	\$282,656,471

IRAN

Earthquake

On February 28, 1997, an earthquake measuring 5.5 on the Richter Scale struck the Sarab and Meshkin regions of Iran’s Arzebil province, 420 km northwest of Tehran. A second earthquake measuring 5.1 on the Richter Scale hit the region on March 2. The two earthquakes were followed by more than 500 aftershocks.

More than 76,000 people were affected by the two earthquakes, which killed nearly 1,000 people, injured 2,600, and left thousands of people homeless. The earthquakes damaged some 12,000 houses and destroyed another 8,500. Approximately 600 classrooms were destroyed by the earthquakes, as well as 19 medical centers, 19 communications centers, 118 religious centers, and 60 public water systems. Roads and power lines suffered heavy damage, and over 160,000 livestock died as a result of the earthquakes. Survivors faced below-freezing temperatures, deep snow, and marauding wolves. The harsh conditions impeded the efforts of relief workers.

The Government of Iran (GOI) provided assistance, as did the Iranian Red Crescent Society, which distributed tents, blankets, heaters, and food supplies. On March 4, the GOI issued an appeal for international assistance. On March 4, Acting Assistant Secretary for the Near East and Asia David Welch issued a disaster declaration for northwest Iran and requested that BHR/OFDA work in conjunction with other USG agencies, U.N. agencies, and international organizations to assess the extent of the disaster and provide appropriate assistance. On March 11, BHR/OFDA provided a \$25,000 grant toward the IFRC appeal to purchase much-needed humanitarian supplies.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$25,000
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IRAN

Earthquake

An earthquake measuring 7.1 on the Richter Scale struck Khorasan Province in eastern Iran on May 10, 1997. The earthquake caused the worst damage in the villages surrounding Birjan and Qaen, two major population centers 850 km southeast of Iran’s capital, Tehran. The earthquake killed 1,568 people. Estimates of the number of people injured ranged between 2,600 (according to the Government of Iran) and 5,059 (according to the Iranian Red Crescent Society). More than 19,000 houses were damaged as a result of the earthquake and 12,000 were completely destroyed, leaving some 60,000 people homeless. The earthquake damaged 315 km of water distribution networks in 44 villages, as well as 405 km of power networks and 50 substations. In addition, 55 medical facilities, 74 cooperatives, and 217 businesses were destroyed, and some 42,000 cattle died.

On May 11, the IFRC issued an appeal for funds to help victims of the earthquake. On May 12, Acting Assistant Secretary for the Near East and Asia David Welch declared a disaster in northeast Iran and requested that BHR/OFDA respond to the IFRC appeal with a grant of \$100,000. On May 14, BHR/OFDA provided a \$100,000 grant to IFRC for food, winter clothing, hygiene items and tents, blankets, and other items for survivors.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$100,000
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NORTHERN IRAQ

Complex Emergency

At the end of FY 1996, BHR/OFDA terminated all active grants for northern Iraq and evacuated all its expatriate and local staff in response to escalated Iraqi military incursions into the region and specific threats by Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein against USG employees. Nonetheless, in recognition of the continuing humanitarian crisis in the region, Acting Assistant Secretary for the Near East and Asia David Welch declared a disaster in northern Iraq on October 28, 1996, and requested that BHR/OFDA consult with other USG and U.N. agencies and American and other NGOs to determine the extent of the emergency and to determine the appropriate response.

After it became clear in the fall of 1996 that local Kurdish employees of USG-funded humanitarian organizations and their dependents were in danger due to Iraqi incursions and threats, BHR/OFDA led an initiative to evacuate the Kurdish humanitarian workers and their dependents. By December 1996, more than 6,000 Kurds were evacuated to Guam pending resettlement in the United States.

Following the evacuation, BHR/OFDA continued its support for humanitarian assistance in northern Iraq through a grant to UNICEF of \$3.7 million for a water and health sanitation program and the training of health personnel. In July 1997, BHR/OFDA provided UNICEF with an additional \$4 million for assistance to IDPs in urban areas and health and water and sanitation programs to assist IDPs and vulnerable families for 12 months. The grant followed a determination that not all of northern Iraq’s population was receiving the maximum benefit from UNSCR 986, a United Nations Security Council Resolution allowing Iraq an exemption from economic sanctions in order to sell relatively small amounts of oil to raise money for humanitarian commodities. The need for funding arose because UNSCR 986 had not provided resources for the management and distribution of the humanitarian commodities purchased.

In addition to BHR/OFDA funding for assistance to northern Iraq and for the evacuation of the Kurdish humanitarian workers and their dependents, DOD spent over \$4 million in FY 1997 on the resettlement operation in Guam for the evacuated Iraqi Kurds.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$8,355,678
Other USG Assistance	\$4,009,000
Total USG Assistance	\$12,364,678

POLAND

Floods

The torrential rains that fell on the Czech Republic from July 6-9, 1997, also affected Poland severely. The heavy rains caused flooding over 5,900 km of western and southwestern Poland, affecting over 86 cities and towns, 875 villages, and 450,000 farms. Poland’s three largest industrial plants were shutdown by the flooding after oil and hazardous chemicals seeped into standing water. Water contamination from flooded industrial sites in the city of Raciborz and the provinces of Wroclaw and Opole created concern among local health officials about outbreaks of dysentery, hepatitis, and typhoid. The floods killed 55 people and forced some 162,500 inhabitants to evacuate their homes.

On July 9, U.S. Ambassador Nicholas Rey de-clared a disaster due to the effects of the flooding. BHR/OFDA immediately responded with \$100,000 to the Polish Red Cross to transport and distribute humanitarian relief

supplies, including tents, blankets, drinking water, hygiene items, and emergency food supplies. After assessing the flood situation in the Czech Republic, the BHR/OFDA team, including two representatives from DOD, traveled to the affected areas in Poland from July 25-30. The team assessed additional humanitarian needs and made recommendations on possible USG interventions in response to the floods.

BHR/OFDA assisted the Polish Ministry of Health with the transport of donated hepatitis A vaccines from the United States to Warsaw (\$32,901) for distribution through Project Hope. BHR/OFDA also funded a grant to Project Hope (\$100,000) to purchase, transport, and re-distribute reagent kits for chemical and biological testing of municipal water supplies. DOD/PK/HA provided humanitarian daily rations and meals-ready-to-eat for flood victims, as well as in-kind contributions of four-wheel drive vehicles, cots, sleeping bags, blankets, bedsheets, and sleeping pads. The estimated cost of DOD’s assistance was \$1.27 million.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$232,901
Other USG Assistance	\$1,269,500
Total USG Assistance	\$1,502,401

TAJIKISTAN

Epidemic

In early 1997, a typhoid epidemic hit the capital city of Tajikistan, Dushanbe. A CDC study, conducted at the request of the Government of Tajikistan (GOTI) and with full cooperation from local health officials, reported 6,005 cases and 80 typhoid deaths in the city between January and March. The study also confirmed that contaminated drinking water was the cause of the outbreak, and it recommended that, in addition to repairs, upgrades, and regular supplies of chlorine and coagulants to water treatment plants, a large-scale water conservation campaign could improve water pressure and decrease cross-contamination.

On February 26, U.S. Ambassador R. Grant Smith declared a disaster and BHR/OFDA responded by providing \$25,000 to USAID/Dushanbe. The Mission released the funding to the IFRC to purchase bed linens, mattresses, blankets, and pillows for health institutions caring for typhoid patients in Dushanbe. State/ENI also donated \$999,000 to the IFRC and CDC to provide technical assistance. The international community provided over \$2 million to the IFRC, the Tajik Red Crescent Society, and other NGOs for preventive and curative activities. The funds also supported a comprehensive health campaign involving local NGOs, the GOTI, and community groups. In late June, the number of the typhoid cases in Dushanbe dropped considerably from the peak in February.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$25,000
Other USG Assistance	\$999,000
Total USG Assistance	\$1,024,000



LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Contents of this Page include information on the following declared disasters:

[Belize-Fire](#) | [Bolivia-Floods](#) | [Colombia-Civil Strife/Displaced Persons](#) | [Ecuador-Floods](#)
[Haiti-Accident](#) | [Honduras-Floods](#) | [Praguay-Storm](#) | [Peru-Earthquake](#)

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BELIZE

Fire

On June 19, 1997, a massive fire destroyed an entire city block in downtown Belize City. The affected area was densely populated and housed a mixture of commercial and residential properties. The fire burned for three hours before being brought under control. There were no fatalities and only one person was seriously injured, but approximately 105 persons (38 families) were displaced and 35 homes were destroyed.

U.S. Ambassador George Bruno declared a disaster on the evening of June 20. BHR/OFDA responded by providing \$7,500 through the U.S. Embassy to the Belize Red Cross to provide basic household goods and furniture to affected families.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$7,500
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BOLIVIA

Floods

Torrential rains struck much of central, eastern, and northern Bolivia throughout February 1997, causing serious flooding in eight of Bolivia's nine departments. Several rivers overflowed, damaging or destroying homes, roads, crops, and livestock. Sixteen people were killed, and over 80,000 were affected. Over 400,000 hectares of crops were destroyed in the eastern department of Santa Cruz alone.

On February 9, the Government of Bolivia de-clared a national emergency and requested international assistance, particularly with air transport and emergency food needs. In response, U.S. Ambassador Curtis W. Kamman declared a disaster on February 24. BHR/OFDA provided \$25,000 through USAID/La Paz to the Bolivian Civil Defense. The funds were used to purchase food from local supplies to meet the immediate relief needs of flood victims in Beni and Pando departments.

In response to a mid-March damage assessment/needs analysis by BHR/OFDA staff, USAID/La Paz requested additional humanitarian assistance funds on April 7. BHR/OFDA then provided an additional \$255,000 for the local

purchase and transport of emergency food rations for 5,200 families in the Santa Cruz, Beni, Pando, and Tarija departments over a three-month period. The U.S. Embassy's Narcotics Affairs Section also donated the use of a C-130 igh-capacity aircraft to support the transport of family emergency rations, as authorized by the Ambassador. The cost of this assistance was approximately \$32,000.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$280,000
Other USG Assistance	\$32,000
Total USG Assistance	\$312,000

COLOMBIA

Civil Strife/Displaced Persons

In April and May 1997, an increase in the level of armed conflict in Colombia's northwestern departments of Antioquia and Choco caused the forced displacement of at least 16,000 people. The largest gatherings were in the municipalities of Turbo, Pavaranado, and Bahia Cupica. Preliminary reports indicated that the displaced population in these areas included hundreds of pregnant women and children under the age of five. Health conditions in the camps established to house the displaced were poor, and a high rate of diarrhea and respiratory infections existed, particularly among children.

In late April, BHR/OFDA Regional Advisor Rene Carrillo visited the affected area and discussed the situation with authorities from the Government of Colombia, USAID/Bogota, and PAHO. Following Mr. Carrillo's visit, U.S. Ambassador Myles R. R. Frechette declared a disaster on May 21. BHR/OFDA responded by providing \$22,913 through USAID/Bogota to the Colombian Ministry of Health. The funds were used for the local purchase of plastic water tanks, water purifiers, vector control equipment, and technical assistance to improve sanitation and assist in the reduction of infectious disease at displaced camps.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$22,913
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ECUADOR

Floods

Between January and March 1997, the heaviest rains of the last 30 years caused severe flooding in 13 of Ecuador's 21 provinces. Particularly hard hit were the provinces along the Pacific coast and the cities of Guayaquil, Manta, Quito, and Machala. By the time the rains subsided in May, the Ecuadorian Civil Defense had reported 16 deaths, 11 persons missing and a total of 11,907 people affected by the disaster. Hundreds of homes were destroyed while many roads, irrigation canals, and approximately 12,000 hectares of crop land were damaged.

U.S. Ambassador Leslie Alexander declared a disaster on April 2. BHR/OFDA responded by providing \$25,000 through USAID/Quito to the Ecuadorian Civil Defense, which was overseeing the disaster response. These funds were used for the local purchase of water pumps and hoses to alleviate the impact of the flooding. A portion of the funds was used to purchase megaphones to broadcast announcements in flood-affected areas.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$25,000
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HAITI

Accident

On September 8, 1997, the Haitian ferry “*Fierte Gonaviennne*” sank as it neared its destination at Montrouis, about 80 km northwest of Port-Au-Prince on the Haitian mainland. The vessel capsized 18 meters from shore and sank very quickly in 91 meters of water when passengers shifted to one side to observe mooring. The number of passengers on the “*Fierte Gonaviennne*” was not known, and estimates ranged from 260-804 passengers. Between 150-300 passengers were estimated to have drowned, many of them trapped and unable to swim to safety.

U.S. military helicopters, U.N. helicopters, and Haitian Coast Guard vessels responded quickly to assist victims and retrieve bodies. The Haitian Red Cross provided assistance to the families of victims.

On September 9, U.S. Ambassador William Swing declared a disaster, and BHR/OFDA provided \$25,000 to assist the surviving family members of the disaster victims. These families received approximately \$125 to defray funeral expenses for each family member lost in the accident.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$25,000
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HONDURAS

Floods



In mid-November 1996, heavy rains caused serious flooding in the northern coastal area of Honduras. The flooding caused 15 deaths, left 7,500 people homeless, and temporarily displaced 30,000 people. It also damaged roads, bridges, and crops. Over 4,500 homes were severely damaged or destroyed, and ruptured sanitation systems contaminated portions of the water supply.

On November 21, 1996, a BHR/OFDA regional advisor conducted an initial needs assessment. U.S. Ambassador James F. Creagan declared a disaster on November 25, 1996, and in response, BHR/OFDA provided \$25,000 to the Honduran Disaster Relief Agency through USAID/Tegucigalpa. The funds were used to procure food for 3,102 displaced families in the San Pedro Sula valley area. On November 29, 1996, a second BHR/OFDA contribution of \$30,000 provided food for 1,000 affected families along the Aguán River east of San Pedro Sula.

Relief workers view the extent of damage due to flooding in La Lima, the most affected residential area in San Pedro Sula. Photo by Kathi McNeil, BHR/OFDA/LAC.

Following a second needs assessment, BHR/OFDA donated 758,880 sq. ft. of plastic sheeting and 3,900 19-liter water containers to contribute toward efforts to provide temporary shelter and potable water to the affected population. These supplies arrived, via airlift, on December 1, 1996, and subsequently were distributed to flood victims throughout the Aguán River area. The total cost of this airlift, including transport and commodities, was \$136,512.



BHR/OFDA-funded relief supplies arrive at the San Pedro Sula Airport to assist those residents displaced by the flooding. Photo by Alejandro James, BHR/OFDA/LAC.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$191,512
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PARAGUAY

Storm

On May 20, 1997, heavy rains accompanied by hail and winds gusting to over 96 km/hour caused severe damage to communities located in the province of Guaira. According to the Government of Paraguay's National Emergency Committee, the storm affected 5,000 people, causing one death and several injuries. Losses were primarily in housing, cash, and crops and were estimated at \$2 million.

In response to a request by the governor of the province of Guaira, U.S. Ambassador Robert Service declared a disaster on May 30. BHR/OFDA responded by allocating \$25,000 through USAID/Asunción to the Paraguayan Red Cross for the local procurement of relief supplies. Funds were used to purchase and distribute metal roofing sheets and blankets to 501 families (approximately 2,500 people) in 22 rural villages affected by the storm. In addition, BHR/OFDA Regional Advisor Rene Carrillo traveled to Paraguay to visit the affected communities and assess relief activities.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$25,000
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PERU

Earthquake

On November 12, 1996, an earthquake measuring 6.4 on the Richter Scale occurred in the Pacific Ocean, approximately 350 km south-southeast of Lima. The earthquake affected the cities of Ica, Palpa, Nazca, Caraveli, Lucanas, and Huancavelica. It was the worst earthquake to strike the region since 1940, killing 17 people and injuring 624, and destroying 4,417 homes and damaging 10,926. Nearly 9,000 families (more than 81,900 people) were affected. Four hundred six schools and 22 health centers were either destroyed or damaged.



Adobe houses destroyed by the earthquake in Bella Union, Acari Province. Photo by Alejandro James, BHR/OFDA/LAC.

On November 14, 1996, U.S. Ambassador Dennis C. Jett declared a disaster in Peru. BHR/OFDA responded by providing \$25,000 through the U.S. Embassy in Lima to the National Institute of Civil Defense. These funds were used for the local purchase of tents, blankets, and other emergency relief supplies. BHR/OFDA dispatched a regional advisor on November 16, 1996, to assess the situation and to make recommendations for additional relief assistance.



Rubble of homes in Nazca, Ica Province. Photo by Alejandro James, BHR/OFDA/LAC.

Based upon the regional advisor's assessment, BHR/OFDA arranged an airlift of 14,688 sq. ft. of plastic sheeting to address the emergency shelter needs of approximately 56,000 displaced persons. The total cost of this airlift was \$201,920, including transport and commodities. On November 22, 1996, BHR/OFDA provided an additional \$50,000 to meet local surface transportation and handling costs to ensure the timely distribution of these shelter materials.

BHR/OFDA Assistance	\$276,920
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Appendix: Summary of BHR/OFDA Response in FY 1997

Obligations from October 1, 1996 - September 30, 1997.

This chart includes funds from the International Disaster Assistance account and transfer funds.

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Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
AFRICA						
Angola	Complex Emergency	10/03/96	-	3,300,000	\$12,646,285	Grants to Africare, ACF, CRS, IMC, MSF/F, MSF/B, SC/US, WVRD, UNICEF, and WFP for emergency relief programs ranging from health care and vaccinations to support for the SDCs and food distribution; grant to UNDHA's Angola Humanitarian Coordination Unit; grant to WFP in support of its airlift operation and transportation of non-food items
Burundi	Complex Emergency	11/25/96	-	1,000,000	\$11,029,649	Grant to WVRD for a medical facility; grants to WFP for nutrition and runway construction; grant to MSF/B in support of nutrition, health, and sanitation programs; grant to IMC for emergency health programs; grant to IRC for water and sanitation assistance; grant to Action Aid for a resettlement/reintegration project; grant to FAO for NGO agricultural coordination; grant to ACF for nutrition; grant to UNDHA for technical assistance; grant to CARE for food distribution and technical assistance
Central African Republic	Civil Strife / Displaced Persons	07/08/97	100	55,000	\$25,000	Disaster Assistance Authority (****) given to UNICEF for medical supplies and latrine construction

Chad	Drought	12/10/96	-	624,000	\$357,000	Disaster Assistance Authority and grant given to ACF for feeding and distribution center operations
Chad	Epidemic	06/11/97	400	8,500	\$25,000	Disaster Assistance Authority given to MSF/B for logistical support and procurement of local commodities
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Complex Emergency	11/12/96	-	1,400,000	\$10,733,302	Grants to AICF/USA, CARE, CONCERN, CRS, FHI, ICRC, Merlin, SCF/UK, and UNICEF for emergency response including health, nutrition, seeds, tools, water, and sanitation; support for USAID/DART, assessment personnel, and OFDA field officer
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
Ethiopia	Drought	07/28/97	-	-	\$48,776	Payment of air freight in connection with the delivery of MREs
The Gambia	Epidemic	04/03/97	90	25,000	\$25,000	Grant to WHO in support of a national meningitis campaign
Guinea-Bissau	Fire	05/29/97	0	211	\$15,200	Disaster Assistance Authority given to Africare for local purchase of repair materials and livestock
Kenya	Drought	01/30/97	-	1,600,000	\$1,857,942	Disaster Assistance Authority given to Water Aid for well repair; grants to ADRA, CARE, the Intermediate Technology Development Group, World Concern, and UNICEF for drought relief and recovery projects; support for a disaster relief manager within the USAID/Nairobi drought coordination unit
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
Liberia	Complex Emergency	10/01/96	-	2,000,000	\$8,639,925	Grants to Africare, ACF/F, CRS, Lutheran World Relief, MDM, SCF/UK, WVRD, UNDHA, and UNICEF for relief activities and coordination; replenishment of water containers drawn from OFDA's stockpile; support for OFDA assessment activities; support for a local Liberian agricultural monitor; support for OFDA's EDRC

Madagascar	Cyclone	01/28/97	200	570,000	\$24,550	Disaster Assistance Authority given to CARE for road repair and water purification in the most severely affected areas
Malawi	Floods	02/19/97	-	400,000	\$25,000	Disaster Assistance Authority given to the Malawi Red Cross Society for transportation of relief supplies and shelter
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
Mauritania	Drought	02/05/97	-	200,000	\$25,000	Disaster Assistance Authority given to Doulos Community for the purchase and delivery of food and for support of costs associated with opening therapeutic feeding centers for severely malnourished children
Mozambique	Floods	02/21/97	78	300,000	\$24,652	Disaster Assistance Authority given to Development Aid from People to People for the distribution of clothing packets to needy families in Sofala Province
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
Rwanda	Complex Emergency	11/07/96	-	1,500,000	\$26,150,280	Transportation of non-food relief items and equipment; contributions of plastic sheeting, blankets, medical kits, and communication equipment; grants to Action Aid, American Refugee Committee, ARC, CONCERN, CARE, Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, FHI, MCI, MDM, MSF/B, SCF/UK, UNICEF, World Relief International, and WVRD for humanitarian programs; grant to UNDHA for information coordination; grant to UNDP for radio installation; funding for program support and evaluation
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
Sierra Leone	Complex Emergency	10/01/96	-	1,500,000	\$5,862,276	Grants to ACF/F, Africare, CRS, ICRC, MSF/H, WVRD, and UNICEF for emergency interventions in water/sanitation, medical and nutritional assistance, health activities, food distribution, seeds and tools, and agricultural support

Somalia	Complex Emergency	10/24/96	-	1,250,000	\$6,055,599	Grants to Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli (International Committee for the Development of Peoples), CARE, UNICEF, ARC, ICRC, IMC, ACF/F, and ADRA for food programs, drought relief projects, health, and water and sanitation programs; grant to WFP for air transport operations
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
Sudan	Complex Emergency	10/28/96	-	4,000,000	\$22,276,953	Grants to ACF, ADRA, AICF/US, American Red Cross, ARC, CARE, CRS, German Agricultural Action, ICRC, International Aid Sweden, IRC, MCI, MSF/B, MSF/H, Norwegian People's Aid, Nubian Relief Rehabilitation and Development Society, SC/US, UNICEF, and WVRD for humanitarian programs; grant to CARE for an economic recovery program; grants to UNDHA and WFP for program support; grant to UNICEF for logistics, camp management, and coordination; support for OFDA's program officer
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
Uganda	Civil Strife	02/05/97	-	400,000	\$905,109	Disaster Assistance Authority given to WVRD for improvements to sanitation facilities; grants to AICF/USA and WVRD for water, sanitation, and nutrition programs; grant to ACORD for seeds and tools distribution; grant to MSF/US for emergency health, shelter, sanitation, and resettlement services; support for a disaster relief coordinator in Kampala
Subtotal					\$106,752,498	

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Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC						

Bangladesh	Cyclone	05/22/97	69	1,100,000	\$159,600	Disaster Assistance Authority given to CARE for the transport and distribution of 14,000 emergency survival packets to assist storm victims; replenishment of OFDA's stockpile
Burma	Floods	09/02/97	140	103,650	\$25,000	Disaster Assistance Authority given to WVRD for the purchase of a one-month supply of food and basic household items (cooking utensils, blankets, and mosquito nets)
Cambodia	Floods	10/01/96	59	1,300,000	\$47,000	Disaster Assistance Authority given to the American Red Cross to purchase plastic sheeting, clothing, and food; grant to WFP to support a flood relief and mitigation project
China	Floods	07/08/96	-	-	\$46,940*	Replenishment of blankets and water jugs used from OFDA's stockpile in FY 1996
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
India	Cyclone	11/12/96	716	1,605,000	\$25,000	Disaster Assistance Authority given to the prime minister's national relief fund to support relief and humanitarian activities
Indonesia	Fire / Emergency	09/25/97	-	-	\$0	Response provided in FY 1998
Laos	Typhoons / Floods	10/08/96	-	420,000	\$128,033	Disaster Assistance Authority and grant given to WVRD for flood relief and rehabilitation
Malaysia	Storm / Floods	12/31/96	125	10,000	\$25,000	Disaster Assistance Authority given to the Malaysian Red Crescent Society to provide assistance to storm victims (OFDA funding not used in FY 1997)
Mongolia	Floods	08/07/97	13	100	\$50,000	Disaster Assistance Authority and grant given to the Mongolian Red Cross for housing rehabilitation and for the purchase of animals and vegetable seeds for poor flood-affected families
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
North Korea	Food / Emergency	09/29/97	-	2,500,000	\$20,217	Support for CDC travel with a Congressional delegation and with a joint WFP/UNICEF effort to survey North Korea's humanitarian situation
Palau	Accident	09/27/96	-	-	\$1,519*	Support for travel for a public health officer to assess accident damage
Vietnam	Typhoons / Floods	10/10/96	162	725,000	\$25,000	Disaster Assistance Authority given to the Vietnam Red Cross Society for emergency assistance to the most severely affected families in the region
Vietnam	Epidemic	10/29/96	-	-	\$0	request withdrawn
Subtotal					\$553,309	

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Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
EUROPE AND THE NEAR EAST						
Afghanistan	Complex Emergency	11/04/96	-	3,000,000	\$2,958,205	Grants to ICRC for winterization, agricultural rehabilitation, water/sanitation programs, and community education; grant to the United Nations Center for Human Settlements for distribution of shelter and non-food relief items; grant to IFRC for IDP relief programs; support for OFDA assessment travel
Albania	Emergency	03/24/97	180	30,000	\$25,000	Disaster Assistance Authority given to CRS for purchase of bed linens by hospitals
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Complex Emergency	10/01/96	250,000	1,400,000	\$19,687,811	Shipment and replenishment of OFDA-stockpiled relief items; grants to ARC, IMC, and Pharmaciens Sans Frontières for medical assistance; grants to ACF/F, CARE, Children's Aid Direct, CRS, IRC, MCI, MDM, Partners for Development, Première Urgence, Solidarités, UMCOR, and WVRD for food and non-food relief items, winterization, and water and sanitation programs; grants to AICF/USA and MERCY for seeds and tools; grants to CARE and CRS for assistance to the elderly; USAID/DART

						operations and personnel
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
Croatia	Complex Emergency	10/09/96	-	-	**	
Czech Republic	Floods	07/09/97	39	50,000	\$184,213	Grant to the Czech Red Cross for transportation and distribution of humanitarian relief supplies; funding for transportation of vaccines to and within the Czech Republic; support for a needs assessment team
Iran	Earthquake	03/04/97	1,000	76,000	\$25,000	Grant to IFRC for assistance to earthquake victims
Iran	Earthquake	05/12/97	1,568	60,000	\$100,000	Grant to IFRC for food and non-food relief items
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
Northern Iraq	Complex Emergency	10/28/96	-	650,000	\$8,355,678	Grants to UNICEF for a water and sanitation program, training of health personnel, and assistance to urban displaced persons; support for evacuation and resettlement of NGO staff evacuated from Northern Iraq; support for costs associated with follow-up after the evacuation of the northern Iraq USAID/DART
Poland	Floods	07/09/97	55	162,500	\$232,901	Grant to the Polish Red Cross for transportation and distribution of relief items; assistance to the Polish Ministry of Health for transportation of donated vaccines; grant to Project Hope for the purchase, transportation, and distribution of kits for testing municipal water supplies
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	Complex Emergency	10/04/96	-	-	**	

Tajikistan	Epidemic	02/26/97	80	6,005	\$25,000	Disaster Assistance Authority given to IFRC to purchase bed linens, mattresses, blankets, and pillows for health institutions caring for typhoid patients`
Subtotal					\$31,593,808	

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Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN						
Belize	Fire	06/20/97	0	105	\$7,500	Disaster Assistance Authority given to the Belize Red Cross to provide basic household goods and furniture to affected families
Bolivia	Floods	02/24/97	16	80,000	\$280,000	Disaster Assistance Authority given to the Bolivian Civil Defense for the purchase of local food to meet the immediate needs of flood victims; funding for local transport of food to affected areas
Colombia	Civil Strife / Displaced Persons	05/21/97	-	16,000	\$22,913	Disaster Assistance Authority given to the Colombian Ministry of Health for the local purchase of plastic water tanks, water purifiers, and vector control equipment; technical assistance for health and sanitation in IDP camps
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
Costa Rica	Floods	02/14/96	-	-	\$15,120*	Replenishment of OFDA stockpiled 5-gallon water jugs dispatched to Costa Rica in FY 1996
Ecuador	Earthquake	04/10/96	-	-	\$67,000*	Replenishment of 10,000 blankets airlifted from OFDA's Panama stockpile to Ecuador in FY 1996
Ecuador	Accident	10/24/96	33	83	\$0	request withdrawn
Ecuador	Floods	04/02/97	16	11,907	\$25,000	Disaster Assistance Authority given to the Ecuadorian Civil Defense for local purchase of water pumps, hoses, and megaphones

Haiti	Accident	09/09/97	225	500	\$25,000	Disaster Assistance Authority used to help families of the victims defray funeral expenses
Country	Disaster	Date	Dead	Affected	Obligation	Type of Assistance
Honduras	Floods	11/25/96	15	37,500	\$191,512	Disaster Assistance Authority given to the Honduran Disaster Relief Agency to procure food for displaced families; provision of OFDA-stockpiled plastic sheeting and water containers
Paraguay	Storm	05/30/97	1	5,000	\$25,000	Disaster Assistance Authority given to the Paraguayan Red Cross for the purchase and distribution of metal roofing sheets and blankets
Peru	Earthquake	11/14/96	17	81,900	\$276,920	Disaster Assistance Authority granted to the National Institute for Civil Defense for the purchase of emergency relief supplies; airlift of plastic sheeting; funding to meet local surface transportation and handling costs
Subtotal					\$935,965	
Grand Total					\$139,835,580***	

* Carry over emergency assistance.

** Obligations combined with Bosnia-Herzegovina.

*** Complex emergencies comprised more than 96% of OFDA's FY 1997 response obligations.

**** The Disaster Assistance Authority is a discretionary fund of up to \$25,000 available to the U.S. Chief of Mission upon declaration of a foreign disaster to meet immediate relief needs.

NOTE: A dash (-) in the numbers dead and affected reflects information that is currently not available.

Disaster Summary: BHR/OFDA'S FY 1997 response includes 55 relief operations, including 51 new declared disasters and 4 carry overs from previous years.